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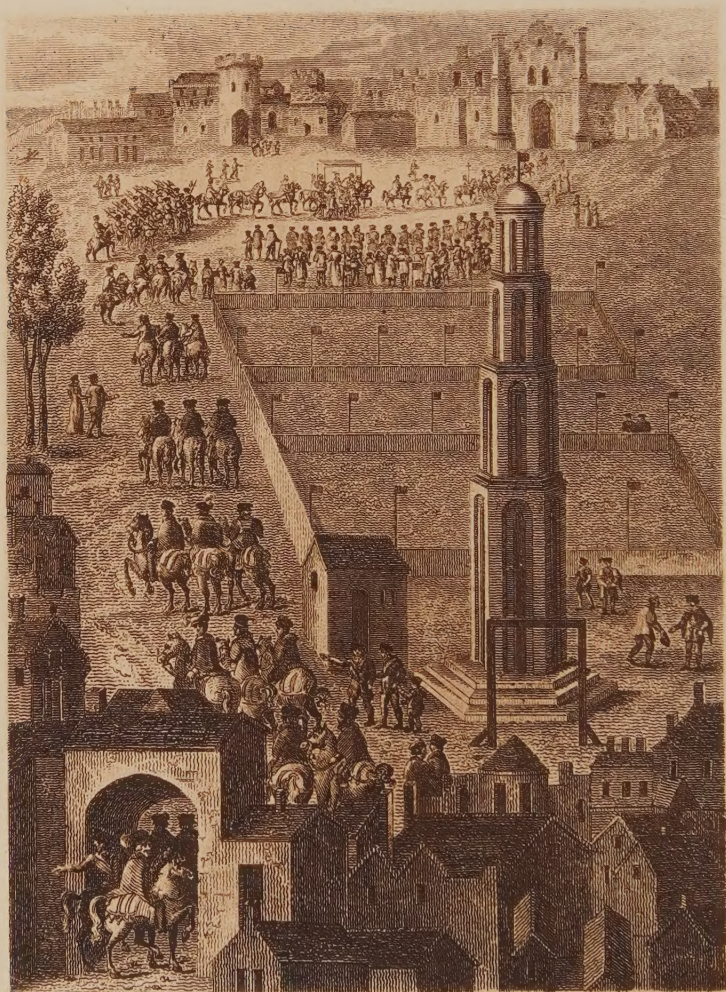
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THE STRAND
IN ITS' ANTIENT STATE, ANNO 1547
 WITH THE STRAND CROSS, COVENT GARDEN, &c
 and the Procession of Edward the Sixth.
 to his Coronation at Westminster.

OLD TIME ALDWYCH, KINGSWAY, AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

BY

CHARLES GORDON

AUTHOR OF "THE OLD BAILEY AND NEWGATE"

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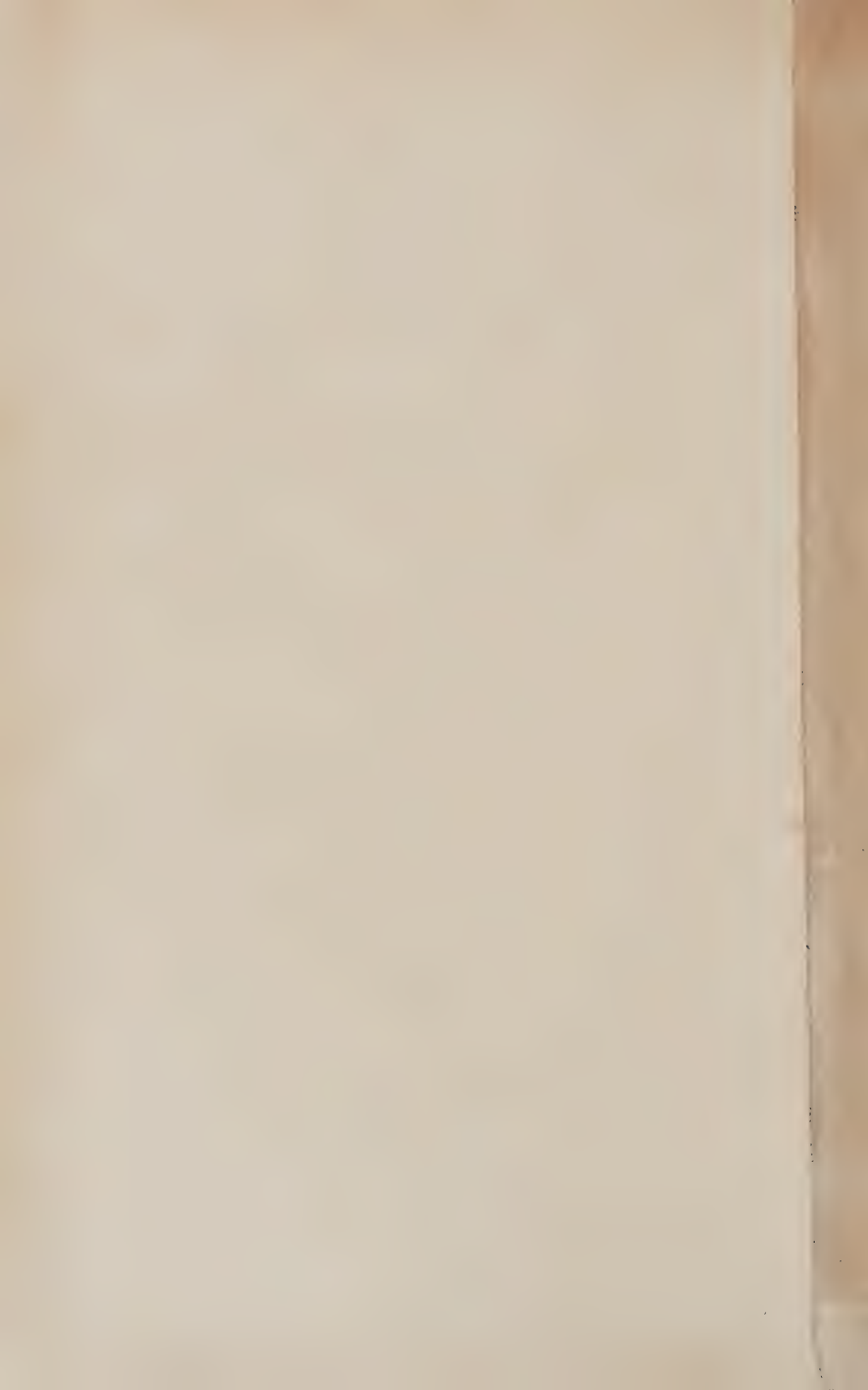
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LIBRARY



OLD TIME ALDWYCH

CHAPTER I

The Spread of London—First Idea of New Street—Fresh Plans—Traffic in the Strand—Bill withdrawn from Parliament—The Act passed—Some Provisions thereof—As to the *Morning Post*.

THE vast City of London has laboured under the very great disadvantage of having been built without a plan. There was once a chance of improvement in this matter, after the Great Fire of 1666 (yet that would only have applied to the City proper); but vested interests would have been utterly set out at nought, and so Wren's magnificent plan for a New London came to nothing; and, practically, it was rebuilt on the old lines.

The limits of the City are well defined, but there was an ever-growing London extending East, West, North, and South, a London which never tires of its expansion, which has swallowed up the neighbouring City of Westminster and every outlying village and hamlet for many miles round, and which is still crying out for more land to satisfy its voracious appetite. This extension also has been carried out on no definite plan, and streets and roads have had their features determined by local conditions, such as the limits of private property, of parish boundaries, and the local configuration of land, an instance of which I may point to in Marylebone Lane, which follows the tortuous course of the Tyburn.

Old Time Aldwych

No human prescience could foretell the future needs of this marvellous growth, and no allowance was ever made for it. Yet in course of time the larger thoroughfares were congested by the traffic, and something had to be done. We burrowed underground and made railways, but our streets are as crowded as ever; and, as time goes on, will present a problem which must be solved, and which can only be done by widening the streets, at a cost which will be stupendous, for every old house taken down is replaced with a substantial building, generally of some architectural pretensions, of a value many times more than the edifice it has superseded.

It stands to reason that these improvements, urgent as they may be, must necessarily be a work of much time, as it is not only a question of cost, but there is the conflict of diverse authorities to be considered. For instance, of what use is the widening of the Strand, beneficial as it is, if the entrance to the City at Temple Bar is always to be as narrow as it now is, and that straitness enhanced by the ludicrous monstrosity of the Civic Dragon and its pedestal? True it is that the value of the land under the jurisdiction of the "Patres Conscripti" is almost fabulous, but a time must and will come when the cost of widening the streets must be faced and grappled with. The London County Council have a deeper purse to draw on—an exchequer which is limited only by the generosity of Parliament, yet they have to bide their time; witness the story of the Holborn to the Strand street, the "Kingsway" and "Aldwych," as told by Mr. Percy J. Edwards, Clerk of the Improvements Committee of the London County Council, in his *History of London Street Improvements, 1855-1897*:

"The question of the formation of improved means of communication from Holborn, near Southampton Row, to the Strand, near Somerset House, has been under

First Idea of New Street

consideration for more than sixty years past. In the years 1836 and 1838 there was laid before the Select Committees on 'Metropolitan Improvements' a plan showing a scheme for connecting Holborn with the north-western corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields by a street 50 feet wide in the line of Gate Street, utilising, but not widening, the western side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and then passing from the south-western portion of Lincoln's Inn Fields to the Strand by means of a new street 50 feet wide in the line of Newcastle Street. In the latter year the Select Committee, in its report, expressed the opinion that the scheme was highly deserving of attention. The improvement, however, with many others at that time suggested, was postponed owing to the difficulty of obtaining suitable means of meeting the cost, and also to the fact that, in the opinion of the Select Committees, there were other works which were even more urgent than the new street.

"Again, in 1847, the improvement was suggested to the Commissioners appointed 'to consider the most effectual means of improving the Metropolis.' In that year the improvement was advocated as part of a general scheme for providing adequate approaches to the proposed public Record Office at Chancery Lane. The only difference between the scheme proposed in 1836 and 1838 and that laid before the Commissioners in 1847 was, that in the latter case it was suggested that the new street, instead of entering the Strand at Newcastle Street, should take a south-westerly direction in order to enter the Strand near Wellington Street.

"The improvement was not carried out, and when the Metropolitan Board was called into existence in 1855 the suggested new street was, with many others, brought under the notice of the Board. From that time until March 1889, when the Metropolitan Board

Old Time Aldwych

was superseded by the London County Council, the scheme was frequently the subject of consideration; but until the year 1883 the Board always hesitated to ask Parliament to sanction such a costly work, in view of the even more pressing need of new thoroughfares in other parts of London, many of which thoroughfares were, with the sanction of Parliament, undertaken. In July 1883 the Board came to the conclusion that the formation of a new street from Holborn to the Strand, including the widening of the Strand at Holywell Street, was a work of much urgency; and it was accordingly resolved to make application to Parliament for the necessary powers, the Government being at the same time asked to aid the Board in obtaining an extension of the Coal and Wine Duties beyond the year 1889. The Government, however, was not favourable to a continuance of the Duties; and the Board therefore did not feel justified in proceeding with the application to Parliament in respect of the improvement. It should be stated that at that time (1883) the Board, from a number of plans, selected one for the construction of a street 60 feet wide, commencing at Little Turnstile, Holborn, proceeding in a southerly direction through Gate Street and the western side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and then curving eastwards, and entering the Strand on the northern side of St. Clement Danes Church. After 1883 the Board did not again decide to seek statutory powers for the work.

"In April 1889 the Council, having the improvement under consideration, referred it to the Improvements Committee, and the Housing of the Working Classes Committee, to report generally upon the subject. At that time it was suggested that, not only did the requirements of the traffic demand additional means of communication from Holborn to the Strand, but that the formation of the new street was also desirable, from the

Fresh Plans

fact that it would cut through a large amount of insanitary property only fit to be demolished. In October following the Improvements Committee brought up to the Council a scheme for the construction of a new street from Holborn, at Southampton Row, in almost a direct line to Catherine Street and the Strand, a spur street being also constructed from the new street at a point about 500 feet from the Strand, and running in a southeasterly direction to St. Clement Danes Church. The Council, however, resolved to postpone the proposed, and any other large permanent improvement, until provision could be made that the whole cost of such works should not fall upon the occupying ratepayer.

“At the same time that the suggested new street from Holborn to the Strand was receiving consideration, the Council had before it a proposal for the widening of the Strand by the removal of the block of buildings at Holywell Street.”

This recommendation was adopted, but the Council decided, in November 1889, that endeavours should be made to compel the owners of property benefited by the improvement to contribute towards the cost, and the necessary Bill was accordingly promoted in Parliament. Subsequently the Council decided not to proceed further with the Bill, as the report of the Select Committee thereon contained no recognition of the principle of “betterment,” which was strenuously opposed before the Committee, the opponents contending that the principle by which local authorities were allowed to take, under compulsory powers, land and houses adjoining proposed improvements, with a view of recouping the cost by a resale at the enhanced value, was a better method of carrying out the object in view. When the Council’s Bill was before Parliament, returns of the traffic were taken, from which it appeared that, on Friday, 7th of

Old Time Aldwych

March 1890, between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m., 11,785 vehicles passed along the Strand, the maximum number in one hour having been 974.

“The subject (of a new street) next came before the Council in July 1891, when the Improvements Committee recommended the Council to apply to Parliament for powers to construct a new street, 90 feet wide, from Holborn, at Southampton Row, to the Strand, at Catherine Street, the spur street to St. Clement Danes Church being on this occasion omitted. The width suggested for the new street was, as on the previous occasion, 90 feet, and the estimated net cost was £933,000. The Council, after lengthy debate, decided that whilst fully recognising the importance of the proposed improvement, it was not desirable to commit the ratepayers to so large an expenditure as that suggested by the Committee.

“In July 1892 the scheme was again brought before the Council, when it was proposed by the Committee that the formation of a new street should be combined with the widening of the Strand, the object being effected by constructing an avenue of great breadth from Holborn, at Little Queen Street, straight southward to the Church of St. Mary-le-Strand, setting back the Strand at the junction, and opening out the southern end of the avenue, east as well as west, on two inclines gradually descending into the Strand, the removal of the block of houses south of Holywell Street being also included. The aim of the scheme was as follows:—

“(a) To combine a first-class thoroughfare from Holborn to the Strand, with the widening of the Strand at Holywell Street and St. Mary-le-Strand.

“(b) To open a direct thoroughfare from the north to the Strand, Temple Bar, Fleet Street, and the

The Bill of 1892

Embankment, going eastwards, as well as for the traffic towards the Strand, Wellington Street, and Waterloo Bridge westwards.

“(c) To improve the communication between the Covent Garden, or Long Acre district, and the Lincoln’s Inn district.

“(d) To open and improve one of the most insanitary and decaying quarters of London.

“(e) To offer an opportunity for a central and commanding site for a new County Hall.

“The width suggested for the new street was 100 feet, whilst halfway in its course a circus, at least 200 feet in diameter, was to be formed on the site of Sardinia Street and Vere Street. The Committee recommended that Parliamentary powers should be sought in respect of the improvement, and that provision should be made in the Bill that the owners of property benefited should contribute towards the costs, which, at that time, was estimated at £2,246,550. The Council adopted the Committee’s recommendations; but whilst agreeing to promote a Bill in Parliament, decided that provision should also be made for some equitable division of the net cost of the improvements between the owners of ground values in the Administrative County of London and the occupiers thereof; and that, in the event of this principle of equitable division being refused by Parliament, the scheme should not be further proceeded with. This equitable division was subsequently sought to be obtained by means of a London Owners Improvement Rate or Charge Bill. This Bill was in due course introduced into Parliament; but when it came on for first reading an objection was taken to the Bill being proceeded with as a Private Bill, on the ground that it was in contravention of the Standing Orders of Parliament. In the result the Speaker ruled that the intro-

Old Time Aldwych

duction of the measure as a Private Bill could not be sanctioned ; and, as the Government was not prepared to promote a Public Bill dealing with the matter, the Council had no alternative but to withdraw the Improvement Rate Bill. In these circumstances, and as there appeared to be no intention on the part of the Government to provide relief to the occupying ratepayers of London in respect to the burden which the execution of the scheme would involve, the provisions relating to the suggested new street from Holborn to the Strand were withdrawn from the London Improvements Bill.

“ In October 1895 the Improvements Committee once more recommended the scheme to the Council for adoption. On that occasion the Council was not prepared to suspend its standing order, which provided that no report from a Committee recommending an application to Parliament for further powers should be considered unless such report were adopted before the Council rose for the summer vacation. The standing order in question not having been suspended, no motion could be made for the adoption of the Committee's recommendation. In March 1896 the Council was recommended to undertake the improvement. Consideration of the Committee's report was postponed. Before the report came on for consideration the Improvements Committee was re-appointed, and the Committee, having regard to certain important suggestions made since the scheme was presented to the Council, decided, by leave of the Council, to withdraw the report, in order that the Committee might once more give the fullest consideration to the whole subject. One suggestion was that the proposal for the utilisation of the western side of Lincoln's Inn Fields as part of a new street should receive further consideration before any other scheme was definitely recommended. Since that time (April 1896) the im-

The Scheme Sanctioned

provement has not again (1898) been taken up by the Council."

Thus far, in the history of the street, goes Mr. Edward's account, but on page 259 we have a short supplement of what was doing at the time of his going to press.

"It will be observed that the scheme included the widening of the Strand at Holywell Street. This portion has been sanctioned by the Council, and is now being carried out, Parliament having authorised the work by the London County Council (Improvements Act, 1897, 60 & 61 Vict. cap. 242).

"The widening of Southampton Row is also being undertaken by the Council.

"It may also be stated that a scheme dealing with insanitary areas in the neighbourhood of Clare Market has been prepared by the Council on the representation of the medical officer of the Strand district, that a provisional order sanctioning the scheme has been issued by the Secretary of State, and that the order has been confirmed by Parliament. The areas in question are accordingly being dealt with under Part I. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890."

At last the scheme was sanctioned by Parliament, and on 9th August 1899 the royal assent was given to "An Act to empower the London County Council to make a new street from Holborn to the Strand, and a widening of Southampton Row," etc. (62 & 63 Vict. cap. 266). By this Act the Council are empowered to make the road as it appears on the map, and they have, besides, great powers to acquire adjacent properties. These properties are not specified in the Act, with the exception of some in the Strand, which are specially mentioned. These are as follow:—

The *Morning Post* premises are to come down, and

Old Time Aldwych

Lord Glenesk is to have a site granted on almost the same plot of ground, and "The Council shall pay the owner (Lord Glenesk) the following sums (that is to say):—

"(a) Such a sum as will recoup the owner for the expenses incurred by him in building and fitting up on the substituted portion buildings in every respect as convenient for the purposes of his business as those now in use, and in rebuilding or making good the undisturbed portion consequent on the taking down and removal of the buildings on the portion to be acquired, and any rebuilding, alteration, or addition consequent thereon;

"(b) A sum equal to the cost of providing new machinery, fixed plant, and other appliances (except such movable plant as can be reasonably removed to the altered premises without detriment to the business), to equip and fit the undisturbed and substituted portion of the premises so that the same may be used as one for the purpose of carrying on the said business as conveniently as at present;

"(c) Such expense as the owner may incur in removing the movable plant, stock, or other effects from the existing premises to the undisturbed and substituted portion;

"(d) If any damage be caused to the owner, or the business in the exercise of the powers of this Act, other than such as is intended to be provided against as aforesaid, the same shall be made good by the Council;

"(e) Such other costs, charges, and expenses as may be properly incurred, and to be incurred by the owner of, and incident to the carrying into effect of this section, to be settled, in the case of difference, by arbitration under the Arbitration Act, 1889."

There are many other clauses, but enough have been given to show that the London County Council have

“The Morning Post”

not been niggardly in their dealings with landowners. There is, however, one short clause I should like to mention: “The owner shall be entitled to affix to, or erect in, or on his premises, in a position as convenient as now, the clock which now forms a part of the *Morning Post* premises, and no objection shall be raised or made by the Council to the same extending over the pavement or street.”

CHAPTER II

Provisions as to the Gaiety Theatre—Short's—The *Echo*, etc.—Site for Gladstone Memorial—Architecture of new Streets—Designs to be furnished—Exhibition of them—The large Hoarding—Work of Demolition begun.

THE freehold properties of the Gaiety Theatre and the Gaiety Restaurant had to be acquired. As to the Theatre, the Council covenant to give the Company "vacant possession, free of tithe, rent charge, or land tax, of a new site which would allow the Company forthwith to build thereon, consistently with the law and the regulations of the Council, a new theatre, equivalent in all respects to the Gaiety Theatre as it now is, and covering at least twelve thousand square feet of ground: such new site fronting the Strand, and the curved street by this Act authorised on the eastern side of such street at the point where such street is intended to form a junction with the Strand between Catherine Street and Wellington Street."

The Gaiety Restaurant (or Grimes Limited, as it is called in the Act) are to have "vacant possession, free of tithe, rent charge, or land tax, of a new site which will allow the Company to build thereon a new restaurant equivalent in all respects to the Gaiety Restaurant as it now is, and covering at least six thousand one hundred square feet of ground; or (in the event of the Council not allowing lights in the eastern wall of the new building) such extra area for internal lighting as may be agreed upon between the Council and the Company; or, failing agreement, as

Compensation

shall be settled by an architect, (if the Council and the Company fail to agree in an appointment) by the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects. . . . The lease of the new site shall be for a term of fifty years, and on the terms mentioned in the Memorandum of Agreement.

“The following provisions shall apply and have effect for the protection of Shorts Limited, who are, or claim to be, the freeholders of the premises numbered 333 Strand, and known as the Strand Hotel. . . .

“(1) The Council shall not enter upon, take, or use any part of the existing premises, or the access thereto, until the expiration of one year, or such other period as may be agreed upon between the Council and Shorts Limited, after the Council have provided at their own expense a site for the business of Shorts Limited, on or within thirty feet from the existing premises, comprising a frontage on the Strand as widened under this Act, not less than the frontage of the existing premises, and a depth not less than the depth of the same, and shall have entered into an agreement to grant to Shorts Limited a lease of such site, at a rent of ten pounds per annum, for a term not less than eighty years. Such site (except so far as it may comprise part of existing premises) shall be cleared ready for building, and available and suitable in all respects for the erection of new premises.

“(2) Such new premises shall be built of an elevation and design and in accordance with plans and specifications to be agreed between the Council and Shorts Limited, etc.

“(3) On the grant of the said lease to Shorts Limited free of expense and in consideration thereof, Shorts Limited shall convey the existing premises and the site thereof to the Council; but Shorts Limited shall,

Old Time Aldwych

nevertheless, be entitled to remain in possession of the same, rent free, for the said period of one year, or such other period as may be agreed upon, as aforesaid, from the date of the grant to them of the lease aforesaid, and to adapt, alter, or pull down the existing buildings, or any of them, in such manner as they may think best to enable them to erect their new premises and carry on their business during such re-erection :

“(4) The Council shall pay to Shorts Limited the following sums: Such a sum as will recoup Shorts Limited for the expenses incurred by them in taking down their existing premises, and in rebuilding and fitting up their new premises, to the extent of, and in every respect as convenient for the purposes of their business as the existing premises, and in altering and adapting the existing premises so as to enable them to carry on their business during the rebuilding and alterations :

“ Compensation for such loss, damages, and expenses as may be incurred by Shorts Limited in consequence of removal of, or disturbance to their business, or otherwise (except as covered by the above provision for reinstatement) :

“ Such compensation as shall be equivalent to the difference between the present value of the fee simple of the existing premises of Shorts Limited and the present value of a lease for eighty years, at a rent of ten pounds per annum of the same premises.”

The *Echo* newspaper has to be compensated for its premises at 22 Catherine Street and 5 and 6 Eagle Court; and the Act contains many clauses for the protection of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons, George Cox, the School Board for London, the Rector and Churchwardens of St. Clement Danes, the Duke of

Gladstone Memorial

Norfolk, etc.—and there is a proviso that, if any part of New Inn Estate be acquired, the Council is to purchase the whole.

These are the principal items of the Act; and, as soon as it was passed, the work of demolition began, with very little regard as to the rehousing of the dispossessed tenants; of course, they have found shelter somewhere, but there are now acres of ground yet to be built over and covered with industrial dwellings. In fact, the work of demolition went as fast as the owners of property could be dealt with.

Very shortly after the passing of the Act a political party found an opportunity of introducing its finger into the County Council pie, as we learn from the following report of the Improvements Committee, 21st February 1900:—

“Holborn to the Strand street—Site for Gladstone Memorial.

“I. We have had before us a letter from the Gladstone Memorial Committee expressing a desire to secure an appropriate site for the monument which they propose to erect in London to the memory of Mr. Gladstone. The Memorial Committee state that the monument, which will be more than a single statue, will be appropriate and important in character, and that its execution has been undertaken by Mr. Hamo Thorneycroft, and the Council is asked to allot a site in connection with the new street from Holborn to the Strand. It is pointed out that the sites which are available in London for a monument of size and importance are rare, and the Memorial Committee express the opinion that the character of their monument will be such as will fulfil all the requirements of the site which may be allotted by the Council, and that

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the work will be in every way worthy of its surroundings.

“The memorial, as designed by Mr. Thorneycroft, has a cruciform base, measuring on the plan submitted about 26 feet every way, with a pavement around it about 6 feet wide. The superficial area of the ground required for the structure will be about 500 feet; or, including the pavement, about 1100 feet. We understand that it is proposed that the memorial shall have an architectural basement of Portland stone, and shall be surmounted, in the centre, by a bronze statue of Mr. Gladstone in the robes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Seated statues, or groups, also in bronze, will be placed on the projecting portions of the base, and the total height of the memorial will be about 32 feet. Mr. Thorneycroft has submitted to us a small rough model of the proposed memorial group; and, after the fullest consideration, we are of opinion that the Council may well be advised to place at the disposal of the Memorial Committee a site for their monument to the memory of Mr. Gladstone.

“In connection with the improvement in question, there are at least three very appropriate sites upon which statues could be erected, viz.: (a) At the junction of the new main street with the crescent road; (b) Immediately to the west of St. Clement Danes Church; and (c) Immediately to the west of St. Mary-le-Strand.

“The Memorial Committee at first thought that the site of the new main street with the crescent road would be most suitable; but, upon our suggestion, they gave consideration to the other two sites in the Strand, with the result that, after a careful examination of the merits of each of the three sites, they have decided to ask the Council to allot that immediately to the west of St. Clement Danes Church. If this site be given, it

Gladstone Memorial

will be possible to obtain for the memorial a south-westerly aspect. If the site at the junction of the main street with the crescent were utilised, the aspect would be a northerly one. It need hardly be said that a southerly aspect is desirable for statues in London. Owing to the space which would be needed for the memorial, it is doubtful whether there would be sufficient room for it to the west of the Church of St. Mary-le-Strand, without either curtailing the width of the carriageway or hiding some of the architectural features of the church. A further advantage attaching to the selected site is, that it can be cleared and made ready for the memorial sooner than either of the two other sites.

"We may state that, if a site in the Strand be given, it will not preclude the erection of other statues such as those suggested in the Council's resolution of 14th February 1899, referring it to us to consider the desirability of the erection, in the widened portion of the Strand, of statues to the memory of Geoffrey Chaucer and John Milton, a question which is still under our consideration.

"We think that the Council, in offering the site to the Memorial Committee, should make it a condition that the architectural and other details of the work shall be subject to the approval of the Council.

"It is right for us to state that the Council's solicitor considers that it is within the power of the Council to accede to the request of the Memorial Committee.

"The Act 17 & 18 Vict. cap. 33 provides that after the passing of the Act, no public statue shall be erected in any public place within the Metropolitan Police District without the written assent of the Commissioners of H.M. Works, etc. It will therefore be necessary to obtain such assent before the Memorial is erected, and

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we accordingly propose to apply to the Commissioners in due course.

“ We have caused to be hung in the Council Chambers a cartoon plan showing the new street from Holborn to the Strand, and the widening of the Strand, so that the general position of the suggested site for the Memorial will be at once apparent. The exact position and extent of the site, and other necessary details, will have to be settled by the Council when the sculptor has completed his design; and, perhaps, after a canvas model of the memorial has been placed in position.”

The recommendation of the Committee was postponed, but on 13th March 1900 it was acceded to by the Council.

On 10th April 1900 the Council considered a report from the same Committee, part of which is as follows:—

“ London has materially suffered in the past, from the fact that the architectural features of new main thoroughfares have not been adequately controlled by the authority carrying out the improvement. It is true, that in one case—that of Northumberland Avenue—the Metropolitan Board submitted the designs for the elevations of the new buildings to the consideration of the Council of the Royal Institute of British Architects; but too little regard has been had in the past to considerations of architectural effect. The result of this apathy is too sadly shown in the cases of Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road. In our opinion, every effort should be made to secure that the great thoroughfare from Holborn to the Strand should, in addition to utility, possess beauty and civic dignity, as some of the grand thoroughfares in certain continental cities. Measures should accordingly be taken to ensure har-

Architectural Competition

mony, though not perhaps identity of design, in the architectural treatment of the buildings to be placed upon the frontages of the new crescent, and on the northern side of the Strand, and perhaps in the main thoroughfare itself. If this be secured the Council will obtain the highest possible amount for the land, and the ultimate net cost of the improvement will be reduced in accordance with the increased dignity which the new thoroughfare may possess.

“ After careful consideration, we have decided to advise the Council to invite designs from selected architects for the elevation of the buildings to front the northern side of the Strand, and the northern and southern sides of the new crescent road, as far as the junction of the main street. We consider that eight architects should be invited ; that the invitations should be carefully worded, so that the Council should not come under any obligation to select any particular design, or to employ any of the architects, and that the Council should have a perfect right to make what use it likes of the plans to be submitted. We have further decided to recommend that a premium should be paid to each architect for the designs. We, at first, thought that a premium of £150 would be sufficient, but it has been represented to us that, in order to secure the best work obtainable, that amount should be increased, and, after full deliberation, we have decided to advise the Council to pay £250 for each design. The total sum to be expended would therefore not exceed £2000, and we have sent to the Finance Committee an estimate of that amount. We think, however, that the cost of the work may well be taken as covered by the estimates of £2,000,000 and £2,742,500, already approved by the Council, particularly as those estimates included more than £2000 for contingencies. Moreover, the Council authorised us, on

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1st August 1899 and 23rd January 1900, to incur expenditure on capital account up to £4,742,500, for the purpose of the Holborn to Strand Improvement. We are advised by the solicitor, that the Council has full power to spend money for the designs in question."

The recommendations submitted to the Council were as follow :—

"(a) That the estimate of £2000 submitted by the Finance Committee be approved, and that, in connection with the Holborn to the Strand Improvement, eight architects be invited to submit designs for the elevations of the buildings to be erected, fronting the Strand, and on the crescent road to be formed between Wellington Street and Clement's Inn. [ADOPTED.

"(b) That the terms and conditions of the invitations be those set out in the foregoing report of the Improvements Committee, and numbered i. to xviii. inclusive.

[AMENDED AND ADOPTED.

"(c) That the Royal Institute of British Architects be invited to nominate four of the eight architects in question. [ADOPTED.

"(d) That the Council do authorise the Improvements Committee to take all the necessary steps to give effect to the foregoing recommendations. [ADOPTED."

In the *Report of the Council for the Year 1900-1901* the above is thus alluded to: "The architects to be selected were nominated, some by the Royal Institute of British Architects, and some by the Council. The names of the eight architects who submitted designs were as follows, placed in alphabetical order :—Messrs. Reginald Blomfield, William Flockhart, Ernest George, Henry T. Hare, Mervyn Macartney, E. W. Mountford, Ernest Runtz, and Leonard Stokes. The designs were publicly exhibited at the gallery of

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THE LARGE HOARDING IN THE STRAND.

[Art Reproduction Co., London]

The Hoarding

the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, No. 5A Pall Mall East, in October and November 1900. The Council authorised the Committee to obtain expert advice upon the designs. Mr. Norman Shaw, R.A., readily accepted the Committee's invitation to advise upon the designs in association with the Council's architect, but expressed his desire not to accept any fee, as he stated that he was anxious to place his services 'at the disposal of a body engaged in the congenial occupation of beautifying the architecture of the City in which one dwells.' The Council felt that it could not speak too highly of the value of the advice and assistance which Mr. Shaw so freely gave, not only with regard to the designs submitted by the selected architects, but also upon the general subject of the architectural treatment of the new thoroughfare."

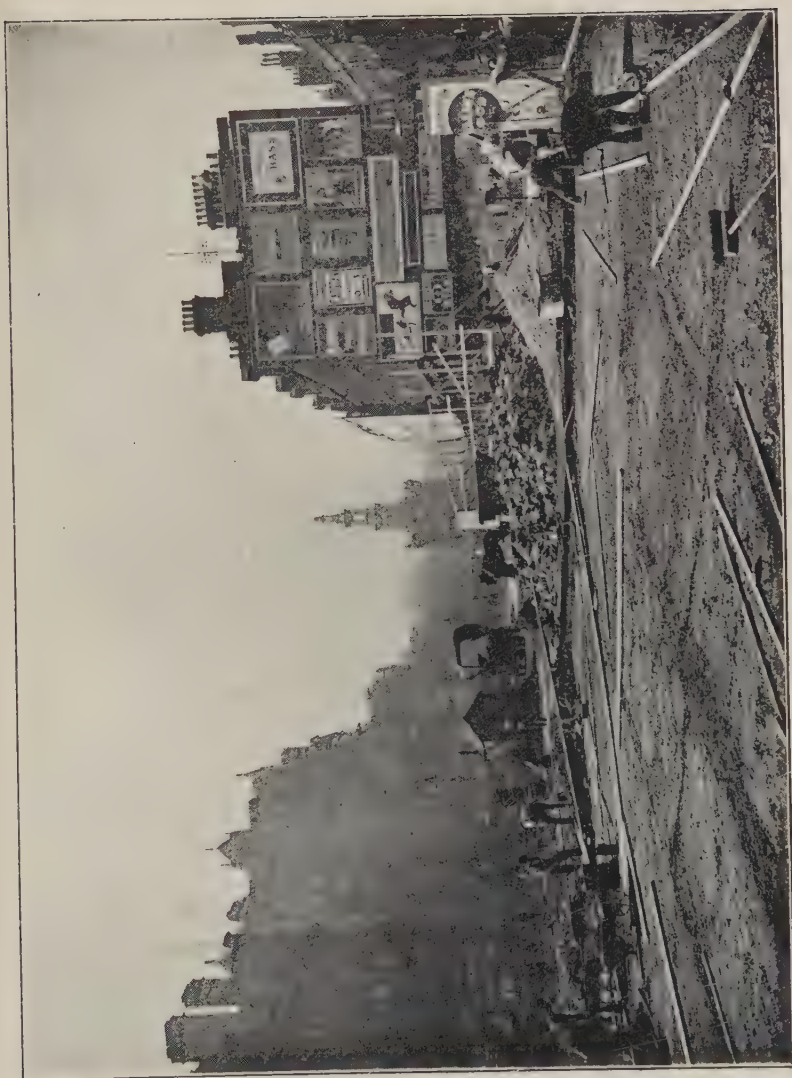
I have seen the eight designs, which are all good of their kind, and while it would be invidious to express an opinion of the superior merits of any one of them, I may mention that the two plainest are those of Messrs. Blomfield and Mountford.

After the passing of the Act empowering the Council to make the new street, some time had necessarily to elapse before different occupiers could have their separate interests settled, and after that it was some time before the absolute demolition took place, so an enterprising advertising contractor erected a huge hoarding in front of the doomed houses—the largest hoarding ever seen in London, and covered it with advertisement posters which were remarkably well chosen for equality of size and for their artistic merits. The illustration is an excellent reproduction of this gigantic advertising hoarding.

During 1901 and 1902 the work of demolition progressed, but at no great speed, and was principally

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confined to the squalid houses of Clare Market and other portions of the route, although some show of vigour was made in pulling down Holywell Street, so as to widen the Strand roadway. The accompanying illustration well shows this portion of the proceedings.



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COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEMOLITION.

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CHAPTER III

Naming New Streets, "Kingsway" and "Aldwych"—Trades Unionism and the slow Progress of the Work—The Work to be done—The *Globe* on the slow Progress—Time of Completion.

THE new thoroughfares were not only "without form and void," but as yet had no name; not that there was any hurry about it, but still, it was as well it should be settled, for people were beginning to publish their own little crotchets on the subject, in any paper that would insert their lucubrations: and at last it was most satisfactorily settled, as we see in the Council's proceedings of 10th February 1903.

"REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

" 19th January and 2nd February 1903.

" *Holborn to the Strand Improvement—Naming of the New Streets.*

"The Council, on 11th November 1902, referred it to us to consider and report upon the selection of names for the new main street to be constructed from Holborn to the Strand, and the new crescent street in connection therewith.

"As these streets will undoubtedly form one of the most remarkable and attractive features of London, the selection of suitable names is a matter of great importance. We have, therefore, devoted considerable attention to the subject, and are now in a position to advise the Council thereon. We have had the advantage

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in our deliberations of having before us a long list of names which have, from time to time, been suggested ; and also the recommendations of the Building Act and Improvements Committees, who had discussed the matter prior to the Council referring it to us. Members of the Committee have also favoured us with memoranda upon the question.

“ We are, in the first place, impressed with the advisableness of selecting, if possible, names which consist of one word only, as in the case of such streets as ‘ Piccadilly,’ ‘ Whitehall,’ and ‘ Cheapside,’ an arrangement the practical advantages and convenience of which will, we feel sure, commend themselves to the Council, and to the public. Secondly, we think that it is well, wherever possible, to make use of some name which will recall and perpetuate the associations of the locality in which the street is situate. The application of this principle in the past has been of considerable value to land-owners, and we think that the present generation should provide for posterity what its ancestors have handed down to it.

“ The district now under consideration is particularly rich in historical associations, being the site of a Danish settlement, named ‘ Aldwych,’ which owed its origin to the great peace established by King Alfred. For many years the name was preserved in ‘ Aldwych-fields,’ and the ‘ Via de Aldwyche,’ the latter being the old name of Drury Lane. The only record of this that has remained up to the present day has been the narrow street known as ‘ Wych Street,’ but this has now been absorbed by the improvement. We think that the Council will do wisely to resuscitate the name of ‘ Aldwych’ by applying it to the curved street at the southern end of the improvement. This name in itself appears to us to be suitable in every respect. It is short and simple, thoroughly English in

Naming the Streets

form, and does not conflict with any other street name in London.

“With regard to the main street extending from the curve to Holborn, we think the most suitable name will be ‘Kingsway.’ This name has also the merits of shortness and simplicity, and the adoption of it at the present moment will be an opportune commemoration of the fact that the improvement was carried out at the commencement of the reign of our present Sovereign; and, as Her Majesty the Queen is a Danish Princess, the association of Kingsway with Aldwych would seem particularly appropriate. Moreover, ‘Kingsway,’ like ‘Aldwych,’ is short, distinctive, and in both form and sound, English. It appears to us no small advantage to get rid of the wearisome repetition of ‘street,’ ‘road,’ or ‘avenue’ in our street nomenclature.” The Council unanimously adopted the report.

On reading this, one would imagine that those names were the outcome of the collective wisdom of the Committee, but, as it is but right to “give honour where honour is due,” I beg leave to give the following short excerpt from the *Times* of 11th February 1903 in its accounts of the Council's proceedings:—

“The General Purposes Committee presented their report, recommending that the new main street from Holborn to the Strand should be named ‘Kingsway,’ and that the crescent-shaped street now being laid out on the site of Wych Street should be named ‘Aldwych.’—Mr. Sydney Low congratulated the Committee on the settlement of this interesting question.—Dr. Napier and Col. Probyn also congratulated the Committee upon the two names selected.—Mr. Beachcroft said it was only right that he should mention that the happy idea of the name ‘Aldwych’ came from Mr. Dickinson.—Mr. Dickinson stated that he received the inspiration

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from Mr. Gomme,¹ the Clerk of the Council—(hear, hear).”

I have before alluded to the leisurely way in which the demolition of the houses, etc., in this new thoroughfare has been carried on, but there is a writer in the *Daily Mail* of 18th April 1903 who goes deeply into the matter; and, allowing but very little for exaggeration and good-humoured banter, his amusing account of the works in progress is very graphic.

“MAKING OF ALDWYCH.

“A STUDY IN SPECIALISATION OF LABOUR.

“Now that warm and brighter weather is promised, people out sight-seeing in London will have no excuse for their neglect of the delightful out-of-door spectacle which is afforded by the making of Aldwych, the County Council’s crescent at the end of their new thoroughfare from the Strand to Holborn.

“There seems to be an idea on the part of people about the Strand, that there is no hurry for a few years for those who would like to see the early stages of the undertaking, and that the enjoyment of the sight of the work in full swing is reserved for future generations of sightseers.

“But inspection yesterday showed that, although the work has only been going on a year or so, it is beginning to manifest such indications of progress as to suggest that it will, eventually, be completed. From the spot where the corner of Wych Street and Holywell Street

¹ George Laurence Gomme, Esq., F.S.A., Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, Member of the Anthropological Institute, formerly President and now Vice-President of the Folk Lore Society, hon. member of the Glasgow Archaeological Society. Formerly editor of the *Antiquary*, the *Archæological Review*, and the *Folk Lore Journal*. Author of many books.

“The Making of Aldwych”

used to be, the line for the new street can be traced for some fifty or sixty yards across the desert of brickbats enclosed by half-demolished houses.

“And that something is actually being done was established by an exploration, by way of Dane’s Inn and New Inn, to a point commanding a view of the interior. A gang of ten or a dozen men, with the assistance of a travelling crane running on a tramway line, succeeded in little more than a quarter of an hour in depositing a large bucket full of mixed ballast in a huge trench that has to be filled in.

“THE TRIUMPH OF ORGANISATION.

“Specialisation of function is the basis of modern organisation, and it is most instructive to observe how highly this principle has been developed under the rule of the Works Committee of the County Council. Every man in the gang had his own separate function, to which he exclusively applied himself according to the regulations of the labour union connected with his particular job.

“The operation they were engaged in was the filling up of the trench with a mixture of wet rubble, sand, and cement, such as would make a solid, enduring road bed. Under the old system, before combination and specialisation were developed, half a dozen men, working without any organisation or method, would have fetched the materials in wheel barrows, mixed them up together, and shovelled the lot into the hole. But Aldwych is not being made in any such higgledy-piggledy fashion.

“To begin with, a mixing board, some ten feet square, is placed on the ground, and around this the mixers, all members of the Mixers’ Union, armed with shovels, wait for the materials to be brought and deposited on the board by the various specialists exclusively charged with

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the several departments of that function. First, a wheelbarrow full of rubble is brought and placed on the board by one man. He is a member of the Rubble Wheeler's Union. Having completed his task, he removes himself and his barrow to one side, and looks on while the other operations proceed.

"THE WATER SPRINKLER.

"A member of the Sand Shovellers' Union comes upon the scene, shovels some sand upon the heap, and retires to assist the rubble wheeler to look on. It is now the turn of a member of the League of Operative Cement Fetchers, who delicately adds the due proportion of cement, and resumes his seat on a cement sack. The heap on the mixing board now requires to be sprinkled with water, and the president of the Battersea branch of the Amalgamated Water Sprinklers' Society rises from a pile of bricks, and comes forward with a half gallon suburban garden watering can, and does the sprinkling with the easy air of one who has thoroughly mastered the art; after which he retires with the can, until such time as there may come another opportunity of usefulness. Then comes the time for which the mixers have been waiting.

"So as to prevent their getting in one another's way, they take it strictly in turn to shovel. The senior member of the executive of the Union leads off, handling his shovel with the nice manner of a *gourmet* with a toothpick. In a few rounds the operation of turning over and mixing is complete. The heap of what was, previously, rubble, sand, and cement, has now become Ballast; and therefore can no longer be handled by any but members of the Amalgamated Ballast Heavers' Trade Association.

Slow Progress

“A ‘JOB’ THAT MAY NEVER END.

“So the mixers take their shovels and discuss federated labour matters with the representatives of the rubble wheelers, the sand shovellers, the cement fetchers, and the water sprinklers, while two amalgamated ballast heavers come forward and shovel the heap into a large iron bucket. When they retire an official of the United Hookers hooks the lifting chain of the travelling crane on to the handle of the big bucket, and the Amalgamated Engineer, who works the crane, removes the bucket to the spot where the ballast is to be deposited. There a member of the League of Meditative Bucket Tippers, who has been eagerly awaiting his opportunity, releases a catch, so that the bucket tips up and shoots its load into the trench. Then, after a sufficient interval for rest and meditation, the series of operations is repeated.

“‘I begin to understand now,’ an interested spectator said yesterday, ‘how very ancient a city London is. Why, at this rate, it must have taken millions of years to build it.’

“In a group of spectators at the corner of the Strand, one man said to another: ‘This is where the new street begins, I suppose; but where does it end?’ ‘You can take it from me, mate,’ the other replied, ‘it ain’t ever going to have any end. This job’s going on for ever.’”

There may be very good reasons for the apparent inaction, for the Council had seven years in which to acquire the property needed, and the roads are not expected to be thoroughly opened for ten years after the passing of the Act in 1899. The subways alone will take a very long time, for it is proposed to have an underground tramway from Theobald’s Road to the

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Strand, with ample space each side for Gas, Electricity, and Telegraphs. The fine broad roads (100 feet wide) will be planted with trees, and it is proposed to supersede the plane, which has hitherto been exclusively grown in new streets, and which, although it grows well, is rather monotonous, with pseudo-Acacia and Ailanthus trees. Both have this advantage, that they grow very quickly, and not to too great a size. The Ailanthus trees in Battersea Park have flourished extraordinarily, and there is no reason to think that they should not do elsewhere.

I think the matter is very fairly dealt with in an article in the *Globe* of 4th June 1903:

“‘Houses, houses everywhere, but not a bit of street,’ might be the altered refrain respecting the new thoroughfare from Holborn to the Strand, which is such an unconscionable time in the making. Talked of for ten years—indeed, from the moment the County Council came into existence—the scheme for the construction of the roadway was approved at Spring Gardens five years ago, and then sanctioned by Parliament; yet, at the present rate of progress, the end of the first decade of the twentieth century will still find Kingsway far behind that picture of boulevard attractions which our municipal rulers drew for us now long ago.

“‘Aldwych leading to Kingsway,’ is the sign-post which meets the inquirer after the new street; but Aldwych, or the little scrap of it which flaunts itself before one, leads only to hoardings, and Kingsway is left to the imagination to conceive, through the windowless, rat-tenanted houses which skirt the crescent, only yet half begun. Whoever suggested the hurried completion of those few yards of road and pavement at the corner near St. Clement Danes was a good showman. It seems to mean so much, and is, in effect, so little; even Wych

Slow Progress

Street is not yet out of the hands of the housebreaker, and where demolition is bringing its dust-clouds, there will you find some stalwart tenant holding on to his premises. 'Business carried on as usual' is cheerfully displayed, amid a desert of empty tenements, as if the writer of the legend was determined to keep his flag of tenant rights boldly flying amid what appears to be evidences of a siege or an earthquake.

"And, as a matter of fact, these isolated houses, where, if business is carried on as usual, it must be with the thirsty housebreakers, and not with a population which has fled as from a city of the dead, tell the story of the delay. It is a penny wise and pound foolish policy that our municipal rulers have been and are still pursuing. Instead of adopting heroic methods of ridding themselves of trading interests, which would prove profitable in the end, they are allowing a great improvement to drag on, although the absence of it was long ago worked out on loss of time to the traffic at the rate of a farthing in the pound on the rateable value of the County. What it means is this: not only is the property already cleared accounting for a great loss in rates, but the longer the new thoroughfare is in the making, the greater interval will elapse before new ratepaying buildings will be erected. This is a serious matter of itself, apart from the pressing need of a new thoroughfare. We should imagine that the parish of St. Clement Danes is half denuded of its rate-bearing property, and much the same may be said of St. Mary-le-Strand: and, as the money for local purposes has to be found somewhere, others have to suffer. To realise how little has yet been done in the way of clearance for the new thoroughfare, it is only necessary to walk along the route of the proposed route. There is the Olympic Theatre still standing, given up for the time to religious

Old Time Aldwych

services, and in Stanhope Street, Vere Street, Sardinia Street, Little Queen Street, and so on, to High Holborn, there is practically no evidence of progress. True, some demolition is proceeding immediately south of Holborn, and Aldwych, the crescent fronting the Strand, is being 'hurried forward,' according to the best information obtainable, although the hurry in which the direct employment of labour is concerned and the word is not to be found in the trade union vocabulary.

"In addition, it should be stated that all the work connected with the widening of the Strand from Catherine Street to the Law Courts has been completed, including the new sewer and the subway for pipes, wires, etc., and the widening of Southampton Row, between High Holborn and Eagle Street is also finished; but these two improvements are, after all, but the preliminaries to the formation of the new thoroughfare, and necessitated by the decision to make Kingsway. It is also to be remembered that the work of forming the new street and clearing the insanitary area at Clare Market has been treated as one scheme, so that the re-housing must also be taken into account in considering the present position of the improvement. In the Clare Market area more than 3000 persons have been displaced, and on the cleared land accommodation has to be found for 750 persons, and at Millbank for 1500. The new street means the displacement of 3700 persons of the working classes, and for nearly all of these house-room has to be found.

"Four months ago the Improvements Committee thought it advisable to present a report with the object of accounting for the dilatoriness which has characterised the whole of the operations both in the widening of the Strand and the making of Kingsway. 'The acquisition of property needed for improvements always,' it was

Slow Progress

remarked, 'occupied a considerable amount of time,' but the Committee did not vouchsafe the information that by refusing to treat, and waiting for leases to run out, years instead of months are being wasted. Even when the new thoroughfare is ready for rebuilding, there is likely to be still further delay owing to the unreasonable conditions which have been attached to the letting of the land; and here again the loss to the ratepayer will be considerable. A rapid clearance of the route of Kingsway, and a speedy rebuilding would mean the expenditure of many millions of pounds by private capitalists in construction, apart from the rents and rates accruing to the Municipality. The London County Council want £1 a foot for the best of the land, and 10s. a foot for a great deal of the remainder; and, if we strike an average of 7s. 6d. a foot, in Kingsway alone (its length is given as more than 10,000 feet), we get some idea of what delay will represent, in the long run, in pounds sterling. Given the rosiest estimate, it will be at least another seven years before Kingsway is worthy its name."

CHAPTER IV

Letting and Building of New Streets—Tavern Licences relinquished—Mr. Thornycroft and the proposed Line of Streets—Criticism thereon—Public Meeting—Mr. Judge's Views—County Council's Help.

AT a meeting of the London County Council, held 26th May 1903, an adjourned report of the Corporate Property, etc., Committee was submitted. This showed that in a recently submitted report the Committee stated that the conditions upon which the property included in the Holborn to the Strand Improvement should be disposed of was receiving their careful attention. After discussing the matter with the Improvements Committee, they had arrived at the following conclusions:—First, that the condition relating to the approval of the elevation and design of the buildings to be erected should not be left to the “uncontrolled discretion” of an individual officer; and secondly, that the clause dealing with liquor licences should be so framed as not to prohibit the erection of theatres, hotels, and restaurants. In certain instances they would be disposed to recommend the acceptance of suitable offers for hotels, theatres, etc., with a prohibition, however, against the erection of public drinking bars. The Committee recommended:

“(a) That the usual clause inserted in the conditions of letting, and form of lease dealing with liquor licences, be not altered; but that each offer to take, for the purposes of a theatre, hotel, or restaurant, land in connection with the improvement, be dealt with by the Council upon its own merits.

Style of Buildings

“(b) That the clause to be inserted in the building conditions of letting by auction, and agreements for building leases, with regard to the elevation and designs of buildings to be erected on land fronting the Strand, Aldwych, and Kingsway, be as follows:—The elevation of the buildings fronting the Strand, Aldwych, and Kingsway shall be constructed of Portland stone, and be of such design as the Corporate Property Committee of the Council shall approve as worthy of the position. Provided that if the design for the elevation submitted by the lessee shall not be approved by the Committee, the lessee shall submit a new or amended design, and, for that purpose shall be at liberty to retain, either alone or in association with any other architect, any one of the following architects, namely, Messrs. H. T. Hare, W. Flockhart, M. F. Macartney, and L. A. S. Stokes. And if the Committee does not approve of such new and amended design, and cannot agree with the lessee upon any satisfactory assessment thereof, the designs submitted by the lessee shall be referred to the senior Architectural Royal Academician for the time being, willing to act, who shall determine whether the designs, or either of them, submitted by the lessee, are, or is, worthy of the position, and the costs of the reference shall be in the discretion of the referee; and, in case the referee shall determine that the designs are not worthy of the position, the lessee shall submit new designs for approval of the Committee, and in case of any difference thereon, they shall be submitted, in like manner, to the aforesaid referee.”

Mr. Emden moved as an amendment, which was carried, that elevations of brick be also allowed, and that all words after the words “Council shall approve as worthy of the position” be deleted.

We have seen how stringent the Council have been

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in the matter of licensed premises ; perhaps it will be as well if we get a glimpse of the cost to the ratepayers by their proceedings. It is but a glimpse, and is to be found in the reports of the Improvements Committee, 28th March and 4th April 1900, which were discussed by the Council, 10th April 1900 :

“ In connection with the widening of the Strand at Holywell Street, the Council is acquiring the ‘ Eagle and Sun,’ the ‘ Norfolk Arms,’ and the ‘ White Hart ’ public-houses ; and, as we are about to complete the purchases, we have decided to recommend the Council to abandon the licences. The whole of the sites of the three properties will be added to the public way for the improvement in question. We have informed the Corporate Property Commission of our intention to advise the Council not to retain the licences, and have asked that Committee whether they concur in the course proposed. We are anxious to obtain the decision of the Council in the matter before the Easter recess, and it is therefore necessary for us to print this report before actually receiving the reply of the Corporate Property Committee. Before this report is considered by the Council, however, the subject will have been under the consideration of the Corporate Property Committee, and the chairman of that Committee will doubtless be in a position to inform the Council whether his Committee agree with the course proposed. We may add that the Corporate Property Committee concurred in our recent recommendation to the Council to abandon the licence of the ‘ Spotted Dog ’ public-house, acquired for the same improvement. The estimated premium values attaching to the sites of the three public-houses under consideration are as follow :—‘ Eagle and Sun ’ public-house, £4000 ; ‘ Norfolk Arms ’ public-house, £4000 ; ‘ White Hart ’ public-house, £3000. Within a radius of 300 yards of

Dealing with Licences

the premises in question there are 49 licensed houses, consisting of 48 public-houses and 1 beer-house. We may add that, up to the present time, the Council has abandoned 46 licences, the approximate value of such licences having amounted to £75,200 in all." The recommendation was adopted.

In connection with the foregoing we find the following in the *Report of the Council, 1900-1901* :—

"In December 1900 Earl Grey called the attention of the Council to the objects aimed at by the Public House Trust Company, of which he was the provisional Chairman; and asked that, in the event of the Council deciding to retain any licence attaching to premises acquired for street improvements, he might have an opportunity of attending the Committee concerned, in order to explain the proposals of his Company. On 4th December 1900 the Improvement Committee recommended the Council that in connection with the Holborn to the Strand Improvement, not more than 12 licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors should be retained by the Council; and the consideration of the recommendation was adjourned until 22nd January 1901. In view of the impending debate in the Council, the Committee thought it right to receive Earl Grey on 16th January. As a result of the interview it was agreed that he should send in a draft proposal of his suggested arrangement between the Council and the Public House Trust Company, and the Chairman of the Committee received from Earl Grey, on 17th January, a letter in which he stated the terms upon which the Company were prepared to undertake the management of as many public-houses as might be transferred to them by the Council. On 22nd January 1901, however, the Council decided to abandon all licences for the sale of intoxicants in connection with premises acquired for the

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improvement; and, as it was not, therefore, possible to entertain Earl Grey's proposals, the Committee subsequently reported to the Council that they did not think it necessary to give further consideration to the subject."

It is now that the Gladstone Memorial comes in as a disturbing element. Mr. Hamo Thornycroft thinks that his work will not show to sufficient advantage under the County Council scheme, and begins to agitate for a modification of it. In a letter to the *Daily Graphic* of 13th May 1903 he says:

"The work of widening the Strand between two well known island churches—St. Mary's and St. Clement Danes—is now sufficiently advanced to satisfy any observer of the vast gain that has been effected in the main throughfare to the Courts of Justice. But it has also revealed very clearly the one weak point in the scheme of improvements, namely, the narrowing of the street at its eastern end, where it joins Aldwych. The reason for this narrowing at this point can only have been for the sake of economy; but now that one can stand on the ground, and see how the plan will work out, it is very clear that it will be a fatal mistake, and one that will wreck the symmetry of the whole effect. The way out of the difficulty is, however, comparatively easy—as may be seen on the accompanying plan, which is taken from the County Council map. The dotted line shows the frontage I would suggest on the north side of the street. The idea is simply to make the Strand the same width from the eastern end of St. Mary's to the junction of Aldwych, a distance of 130 yards.

"This not very serious alteration on the existing plan would give three permanent, and I venture to say very important, advantages. Firstly, in bringing the beautiful and symmetric church of St. Mary's into align-

Widening the Strand

ment with the centre of the thoroughfare; secondly, in making the direction of the thoroughfare aim at the front of the church of St. Clement, and not at one corner of it, as it most awkwardly does at present; and thirdly, it would secure, for the future, a good view of the Courts of Justice to all coming along the Strand from the west.

“The first two of these results are very desirable, for the new arrangement, as at present indicated by the newly laid pavement, seems only to have accentuated the singularly awkward angle at which the two churches are set in relation to the line of the street, and I am confident that unless the line of the north side of the street is thrown back, as suggested, the general effects of the ‘improvements’ at this point will be a constant eyesore—not a crookedness which is picturesque, but an unfortunate crookedness—yet one which now, happily, there is time to avoid.

“As I have said, the only valid objection that can be made to the proposal is on the score of economy, as it would curtail the frontage some 60 feet in the new street, Aldwych, but I have no doubt whatever that the gain in a fine, generous, open space, and a symmetric effect in the great thoroughfare of the Strand, would more than compensate for the outlay. The change could now be easily made; later, when buildings have been erected, it would be a costly matter.”

The editor of the *Daily Graphic* appends a footnote to this letter: [“In order that the importance of Mr. Thornycroft’s proposal may be more thoroughly appreciated, we have prepared a sketch of the view of the Law Courts and St. Clement Danes Church, which would be obtained if his suggestion were adopted. In the event of the present scheme of the London County Council being carried out without amendment, the corner of the Strand and Aldwych would come at the spot marked in

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the sketch by a cross, and the splendid view would be shut out.”]

In the same newspaper of 20th May 1903, Mr. Walter Emden, an architect of 105, 106 Strand, challenges Mr. Thornycroft's statement. He says: "In a recent issue of the *Daily Graphic* Mr. Hamo Thornycroft raised a point with reference to the Strand improvement at the eastern end of Aldwych, and submitted a plan of the streets in this locality showing the roadway



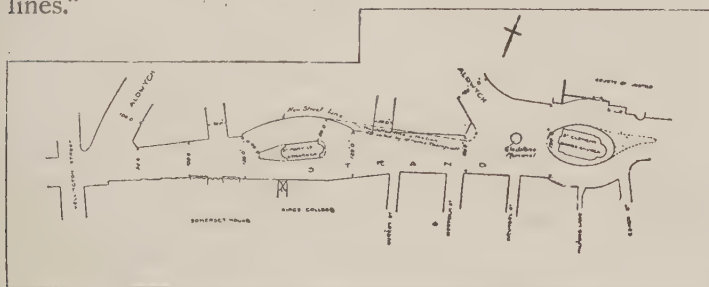
much narrower than is intended at the end opposite Norfolk Street. The sketch plan given differed materially from the authorised plan of the improvement. The direction of the northern line of the Strand between Norfolk Street and St. Mary-le-Strand from this plan would appear to run well to the south of the centre of St. Clement Danes Church, whereas, in reality, the line runs to the north of the centre of the church, and, instead of being tangential to the curve of the north

Widening the Strand

side of St. Mary-le-Strand, it is really as shown on the accompanying sketch, which is prepared from official plans.

“ Perhaps Mr. Thornycroft has been misled by the existing hoarding, which is some feet in advance of the actual building line.

“ The plan herewith shows the error of Mr. Thornycroft's assumption, while the cutting (even if necessary) of part of the eastern house of the crescent might, by some, be considered to make the design of the crescent, as a whole, unsymmetrical. In the accompanying plan Mr. Thornycroft's suggested line is indicated by dotted lines.”



"IMPROVED TIE STRAND IMPROVEMENT". THE OFFICIAL PLAN OF THE NEW STRAIT LINE COMPARED WITH MR. THORNTON'S SUGGESTION (INDICATED BY THE DOTTED LINE FOR THE ALTERATION OF THE CORNER OPPOSITE WOLFPOLE STRAIT)

To this letter Mr. Thornycroft made no reply, but the matter was not allowed to rest, some one convened a meeting which was duly held in Exeter Hall, on 10th June 1903, in support of his suggestion. Sir Henry Lawrence, Bart., sub-treasurer of the Inner Temple, was elected to the chair. He said he was convinced the London County Council would be amenable to a suggestion on the matter.

Mr. Mark Judge said many members of the Royal Academy and other well-known people were in sympathy with them.

Mr. Lionel Cust, director of the National Portrait Gallery, wrote that Kingsway and Aldwych afforded one

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of the greatest opportunities for adorning London that had occurred since the building of Regent Street.

Mr. Henry Wilson moved, and the Rev. Sir William Earle seconded, the following resolution :—

“That, in the opinion of this meeting, it will be nothing less than a disfigurement of the Metropolis if the present boundary of the roadway on the north between the two Strand churches be adhered to, and it is hereby resolved that those who approve of the roadway of the new Strand being allowed to take its natural course from St. Mary’s to the Law Courts be constituted a further Strand Improvement Committee to induce the London County Council not to extend the buildings in Aldwych into the roadway of the Strand. An executive committee was then appointed.

Sir William Earle said the London County Council was the most reasonable public body he had ever had to deal with, and he had great hopes that their suggestions would be favourably received.

Mr. Vesey Campbell moved that a suitable memorial to the London County Council be prepared.

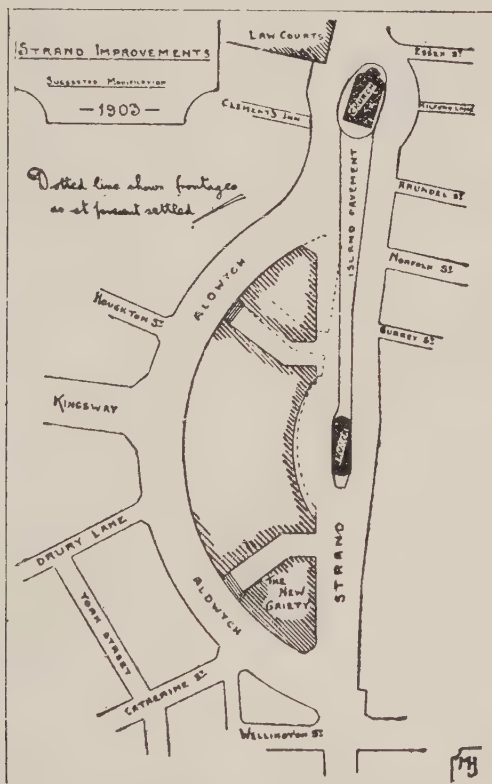
It was agreed that copies of the memorial be forwarded to the Common Council and the Metropolitan Borough Councils, with a letter soliciting their support.

The Mr. Mark Judge mentioned above, who was the honorary secretary of this self-elected Committee, had previously aired his opinions on the subject in the press. In the *Daily Graphic* of 27th May 1903 appears a plan and a letter from him, in which he says: “I send you a complete plan showing the line of frontage recommended by Mr. Thornycroft, and so carried out, that the horns of the crescent correspond. The plan appears to remove all the objections to the retaining of the two churches, and those who desire to see these churches preserved, should be among the most earnest supporters of Mr.

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Thornycroft's proposal; for, if the north front of the Strand should not be set back as proposed, there is certain, sooner or later, to be a renewed demand for the removal of the churches.

"In my plan I have shown an island pavement



Plan illustrating Mr. Judge's suggestion.

between the churches, which I venture to think would be a further improvement, for it would give an open space, free from the stream of traffic, in one of the busiest thoroughfares of the Metropolis, a space where trees might be planted without that hindrance to light and ventilation which is too often a result when trees are

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planted in the side walks where the buildings have no fore court. London is sadly deficient in such island pavements, where one may linger without interrupting or being interrupted by the stream of traffic."

The County Council behaved with great courtesy to this "Committee," postponed the sales of land, and erected three lines of scaffold poles with distinguishing marks, as shown by an illustration which appeared in the *Daily Graphic* of 23rd July 1903.

After mature consideration the County Council determined to abide by their original plan (on 20th October 1903). One scheme would have cost the rate-payers about £75,000; the other, £250,000.

CHAPTER V

Whence "Aldwych" takes its Name—Fabyan and the Fire of 982—Professor Worsaae and the Danes in London—What the Danes were like—The Stocks outside Temple Bar—Church of St. Clement Danes—Massacre of the Danes—Col. Prideaux and "Aldwych"—Danes' skins on Church Doors.

WHETHER Aldwych is derived from the eighteen acres so called, belonging to the monastery of St. Giles, and adjoining Drury Lane, or from Ald (old) and Wic (town, village, or settlement), a term which undoubtedly shows its antiquity, I know not. That the Danes had a settlement here is incontestable, and it was very populous, if we can believe Fabyan, who, in his *Chronicles*, speaking of the great fire of 982, says: "And in the ende of the same yere, a great part of the cytie of London was wasted with fyre; but howe it began myne auctour myndeth nat. But ye shal vnderstande that, at this day, the cytie of London had moste howsynge and buyldynge from Ludgate towarde Westminster; and lytell or none where the chefe or herte of y^e cytie is nowe, except in dyuers places, was howsynge, but they stode wout ordre; so y^t many townes and cyties, as Caunterbury, Yorke and other dyuers in Englāde passed London in buyldynge at those dayes, as I haue seen or knowen by an olde boke sometye in y^e Gylde hall of London, named Domys daye."

Professor Worsaae, who at the command of King Christian VIII. of Denmark visited England in 1846–1847, to report on the memorials and monuments of the Danes and Norwegians which might still be extant in

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Scotland and the British Islands, speaking of the Danish settlements near London, and of St. Clement's Church : " It has, indeed, been supposed by some that this church was called after the Danes only because so many Danes have been buried in it ; but, as it is situated close by the Thames, and must have originally lain outside of London proper, it is certainly put beyond all doubt, that the Danish merchants and mariners who, for the sake of trade, were at that time established in or near London, had here a place of their own, in which they dwelt together as fellow-countrymen. Here it should also be remarked that this church, like others in commercial towns, as, for instance, at Aarhus in Jutland, at Trondhjem in Norway, and even in the City of London (in Eastcheap), was consecrated to St. Clement, who was especially the seaman's patron saint. The Danes naturally preferred to bury their dead in this church, which was their proper parish church.

" The Danes and Norwegians also possessed an important place of trade on the southern shore of the Thames, opposite the city—in Southwark, as it is called, which was first incorporated with London, as part of the city, in the Middle Ages. The very name of *Southwark*, which is unmistakably of Danish or Norwegian origin, is evidence of this. The Sagas relate that, in the time of King Svend Tveskjæg, the Danes fortified this trading place ; which, evidently on account of its situation to the south of the Thames and London, was called "Sydvirke" (Sudrvirki), or the southern fortification. . . . The Northmen had a church in Sydvirke dedicated to the Norwegian King, Olaf the Saint. Olaf, who fell at the battle of Stiklestad in 1030, was so celebrated a saint that churches were built in his honour, not only in Norway, where he became the patron saint of the kingdom, and in the rest of Scandinavia, but also in every place where

The Danes in London

the Northmen established themselves; nay, even in distant Constantinople the Varangians had a church called after him. There is still a street in Southwark, close by London Bridge and the Thames, which bears the significant name of Tooley Street, a corruption of St. Olaf's Street. On the northern side stands a church called St. Olave's Church, which is found mentioned by that name as early as the close of the thirteenth century.

"Within the City, in what may be strictly called ancient London, where the Sagas already mention a St. Olaf's Church, there are to be found, at this day, no fewer than three churches consecrated to St. Olaf, namely, in Silver Street; at the north-west corner of Seething Lane, Tower Street; and in the Old Jewry (St. Olave's Upwell). The two last named stand in the eastern extremities of the City, yet within its ancient boundaries. In the same neighbourhood, near London Bridge, there is also a church dedicated to St. Magnus the Martyr, which likewise undoubtedly owes its origin to the Northmen, either Norwegians or Danes. St. Magnus was a Norwegian jarl, who was killed, in the twelfth century, in Orkney, where the cathedral in Kirkwall is also consecrated to him.

"That so many churches in London should be named after these Norwegian saints, Olaf and Magnus, who, moreover, were not canonised till after the death of Canute the Great and the overthrow of the Danish dominion in England, furnishes no mean evidence of the influence of the Northmen in London. It confirms in a remarkable manner the truth of the old statements that the Danes who dwelt in London could, at times, even turn the scales at the election of a king; as, for instance, after the death of Canute the Great. An English chronicler, speaking of the power of the Danes at that period, adds that the citizens of London had,

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by reason of their frequent intercourse with '*the barbarians*' (the Danes), almost adopted their manners and customs. And it was, indeed, natural that the long voyages of the Northmen, and the important commerce carried on between the countries of Scandinavia and England, should have long secured to the northern merchants an influential position in a city like London, which was in the highest degree a commercial city, and particularly when these merchants had once been established there in great numbers."

To read Professor Worsaae, one would think that the Danes were peaceable folk, but our old chroniclers tell a very different tale, and, in common with very many others, I am of opinion that when the early English permanently got the best of the Danes, they would not tolerate them in their midst, but made them settle outside the liberties of the City, at Temple Bar and on the south side of the river. They had not forgotten the time of which Fabian speaks: "But, or I procede further, here will I touche some what of the pryde and abusyon of the Danys, that they exercysed in Englande in some parte therof, as I have seen in an olde cronycle, wherof the auctour is vnknownen. There it is shewed that the Danys, by strengthe, caused the husbande men to ere and sowe the lande, and do all other vyle laboure that belonged to husbandry; and y^e Dane held his wyfe at his pleasure, w^t doughter and servaunt; and whan the husband mā came home, he shuld scantly have of his owne, as alowys or servānt had: so that the Dane had all his cōmaundement, and ete and dranke his fyll of the best, whan y^e owner had scantly his fyll of the worst. And over that, the comon people were so of them oppressed, y^t for fere and drede, they called them, in every such house as they had rule of, lord Dane. But in processe of tyme the Danys were voyded y^e lande. This word lorde Dane

Harold “Harefoot”

was, in dyspersion and despite of the Danys, touned by the Englysshemen into a name of opprobrie, and called Lurdayn, whyche, to our dayes, is nat for gotten; but whan one Englysshe man woll rebuke an other, he woll, for the more rebuke, call hym Lurdayn.”

No one can possibly write about London without consulting Strype’s continuation of Stow’s Survey. And this is what he says about the old history of St. Clement Danes: “Now to begin again at *Temple Bar*, over against it, in the high Street standeth a pair of Stocks,¹ and then one large middle Row of Houses and small tenements builded, partly opening to the south, partly towards the north, stretching to a Stone Cross, now headless, against the *Strand*. Amongst the which standeth the Parish Church of *St. Clement Danes*, so called because *Harold*, a *Danish* King, and other Danes were buried there, and in that churchyard.

“This *Harold*, whom King *Canutus* had by a Concubine, reigned three years, and was buried at *Westminster*; but afterward, *Hardicanutus*, the lawful son of *Canutus*, in revenge of a Displeasure done to his Mother, by expelling her out of the Realm, and the Murder of his Brother *Alured*, commanded the Body of *Harold* to be digged out of the Earth, and to be thrown into the *Thames*, where it was by a Fisherman taken up and buried in this Churchyard. But out of a fair ledger Book, sometime belonging to the Abbey of *Chartsey* in the County of *Surrey*, is noted, as in *Francis Thinn*, after this sort.

“In the Reign of King *Ethelred*, the Monastery of *Chartsey* was destroyed, ninety *Monks* of that House were slain by the *Danes*, whose bodies were buried in

¹ These must have been removed to Portugal Street, for on 4th August 1826 they were removed thence and destroyed. This was the last pair of stocks that remained in London.

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a place near to the old Monastery. *William of Malmesbury saith*, They burnt the Church, together with the *Monks* and *Abbot*; but the *Danes* continuing in their Fury (throughout the whole land) desirous, at the length, to return home into *Denmark*, were (by the just Judgment of *God*) all slain at *London*, in a Place which is called the *Church* of the *Danes*.

"There is yet another reason given of this Denomination of the Church from the *Danes*. Namely, that when the *Danes* were utterly driven out of this Kingdom; and none left but a few, who were married to English women; these were constrained to inhabit between the Isle of *Thorne* (that which is now called *Westminster*) and *Cacer Lud*, now called *Ludgate*. And there they builded a Synagogue. The which, being afterwards consecrated, was called *Ecclesia Clementis Danorum*. This Account of the Name did the learned Antiquarian, *Flectwood*, some time Recorder of *London*, give to the Lord Treasurer *Burghley*, who lived in this Parish."

With regard to the burial of the body of Harold, Florence of Worcester tells us that Hardicanute, "calling to mind the injuries which both he and his mother had suffered at the hands of his predecessor, and reputed brother, King Harold, he despatched to London, *Ælfric*, Archbishop of York, and Earl Godwin, with Stor, the master of his household, Edric, his steward, Throud, captain of his guards, and other men of high rank, with orders to dig up the body of Harold, and throw it into a sewer; and when it was thrown there, he caused it to be dragged out, and cast into the river Thames. Shortly afterwards, it was picked up by a fisherman, and being immediately brought to the Danes, was honourably buried by them in a cemetery they possessed in London."

The Saxon Chronicle is silent as to Harold's¹ corpse

¹ Called "Harefoot," because of his extraordinary swiftness in running.

Massacre of Danes

being thrown into the Thames, and fished up, but both William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon agree with the foregoing relation, and Ralph de Diceto goes a step further, and says it was buried by the Danes, "in a cemetery which they had in London, by St. Clement's."

As to the massacre of the Danes in St. Clement's Church, it seems to have been borne out by the *Jomsvikinga Saga*; but as I can find no translation of it I am fain to borrow from Mr. Lethaby's *Pre-Conquest London*, p. 113 *et seq.*:

"An account in the *Jomsvikinga Saga*, however inaccurate in detail, contains some interesting allusions to the Danes in London. We are told that Sweyn made warfare in the land of King Ethelred, and drove him out of the land; he put '*Thingamannalid*' in two places. The one in '*Lundunaborg*' (London) was ruled by Eilif Thorgilsson, who had sixty ships in the '*Temps*' (Thames); the other was north in Slesvik. The Thingamen made a law that no one should stay away a whole night. They gathered at the Bura Church every night when a large bell was rung, but without weapons. He who had command in the town (London) was Ædric Streona. Ulfkel Snilling ruled over the northern part of England (East Anglia). The power of the Thingamen was great. There was a fair there (in London) twice in every twelve month, one about midsummer and the other about midwinter. The English thought it would be the easiest to slay the Thingamen while Cnut was young (he was ten winters old) and Sweyn dead. About Yule, waggons went into the town to the market, and they were all tented over by the treacherous advice of Ulfkel Snilling and Ethelred's sons. Thord, a man of the Thingamannalid, went out of the town to the house of his mistress, who asked him to stay, because the death

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was planned of all the Thingamen by Englishmen concealed in the waggons, when the Danes should go unarmed to the church. Thord went into the town and told it to Eilif. They heard the bell ringing, and when they came to the Churchyard, there was a great crowd who attacked them. Eilif escaped, with three ships, and went to Denmark. Some time after, Edmund was made king. After three winters Cnut, Thorkel, and Eric went with eight hundred ships to England. Thorkel had thirty ships, and slew Ulfkel Snilling, and married Ulfhild, his wife, daughter of King Ethelred. With Ulfkel was slain every man on sixty ships, and Cnut took Lundunaborg.

"The massacre of the Danes at the 'Bura church' must be the same event as is noticed by Stow in his account of St. Clement Danes, and also by Matthew of Westminster under the year 1012. Stow seems to suggest that it was in consequence of an attack on Chertsey Abbey. Messrs. Napier and Stevenson, in a recent reference to this story in their *Crawford Charters*, are 'inclined to think that this account of the fate of the Jomsborg Thingamenn is based on real events.' They have found Eilif and Thordr signing charters for Cnut. The fight with Ulfkel was at Ringmere, near Thetford."

Canute's fleet must have been a wonderful sight, for the *Heims Kringla* tells us that the ships were "wondrously big: he himself (the King) had that dragon which was so mickle that it told up sixty benches, and on it were heads gold bedight, but the sails were banded of blue and red and green." This was almost as beautiful as Olaf Tryggvison's war dragon. "Forward on it was a dragon's head, but after wards a crook fashioned in the end as the tail of a dragon; but either side of the neck and all the stern were overlaid with gold. That ship

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the King called the Worm, because when the sail was aloft, then should that be as the wings of the dragon." Some of these old boats have been found in the beds of rivers, etc., and in 1900 a boat, thought to be Danish, 50 feet long and 9 feet beam, was found in the river Lea.

We have no idea of the width of the river at the time of the Danish settlement round St. Clement's Church, but the probability is that it was wider than at present, and we should naturally imagine that the inhabitants would not build their houses on the river bank or strand, where they would be liable to flood in case of an exceptionally high tide; and I think the suggestion of so good an antiquary as Colonel Prideaux is entitled to every respect. In *Notes and Queries* (9 S. ii. p. 81) he says: "South of Great Queen Street, the district in former times was generally coextensive with the area of what was, perhaps, the oldest suburb of London, the village of Ældwic, or Aldwic, known later as Aldewych, and of which, so late as the days of the Stuarts, some vestiges remained in Oldwych Close, an open space which lay to the south of Lincoln's Inn Fields. This village in the tenth century was largely colonised by the Danes, after whom the neighbouring Church of St. Clement was named. The high road of the village, which connected it with the Hospital of St. Giles, was known as the Via de Aldewych, and is represented by the modern Drury Lane, with the exception of the south-eastern extremity, which led to the holy well of St. Clement, and the name of which still survives in Wych Street."

A singular reminiscence of the Danes existed on a door at Westminster Abbey, which had the skins of some Danes nailed upon it—at least the tradition was that they were so—and this tradition was also current

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of other church doors in different parts of the country. In the *Proceedings at Meetings of the Archæological Institute*, 1st April 1853 (vol. x. p. 167): "Mr. Way stated some particulars relative to the recent examination of a wooden door, coated in ancient times with human skin, at Westminster Abbey, a memorable addition to the instances of such savage practices, in which Mr. Way had been enabled to prove the truth of popular tradition, namely, at Worcester Cathedral, at Hadstock and Copford, as related in a former volume of the *Journal*.¹ Another instance of such tradition is recorded by Pepys in his *Diary*, 10th April 1661, stating that he visited Rochester Cathedral, and—'then away thence, observing the great doors of the Church, as they say, covered with the skins of the Danes.' Traces of the like barbarous punishment, *in terrorem*, inflicted upon sacrilegious Danes, had been recorded as formerly existing at Westminster Abbey. Dart,² in 1723, describing the south transept of the church, gives a minute account of the 'old Revestry' beyond it, and adjacent to the old chapel of St. Blaise, which appears to have been in the transept, but now wholly removed to clear the space appropriated to modern memorials in Poets' Corner. 'This Revestry (which is called the Chapel of Henry VIII., for what reason I know not, unless for that he stripped it of its furniture) is enclosed with three doors, the inner cancellated; the middle, which is very thick, lined with skins like parchment, and driven full of nails. These skins, they by tradition tell us, were some skins of the Danes, tann'd, and given here as a memorial of our Delivery from them."

Frank Buckland, whose father had been Dean of

¹ Vol. v. p. 185.

² *Westmonasterium; or the History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St. Peter's, Westminster.*

Danes' Skins

Westminster, says in his *Curiosities of Natural History* (First Series, p. 84): "Not very long ago a portion of hard dry skin was found underneath the bossed head of a huge iron nail that was fixed into the door of the Chapter House at Westminster. Upon this skin were found several hairs. Mr. Quekett, curator of the College of Surgeons, recognised this hair to be human, and asserted that it belonged to a fair-haired person. In former times the Danes used to come up the mouths of the English rivers to pillage the churches. When they were caught they were skinned, and their skins nailed to the door of the church they attacked. In course of time all the exposed portion would peel off; that covered by the nail would be protected, and thus bear testimony to the cruelty of our ancestors. In the College of Surgeons may be seen three specimens of human skin, presented by Mr. Albert Way, viz.: 'Portion of human skin, said to be that of a Dane, from the door of a church at Hadstock in Essex'; a second specimen is from Copford, in Essex, and a third from the north door of Worcester Cathedral."

In order to show how late the traditional idea of the Dane exists, I will quote a note in *Notes and Queries* of 4th June 1887, from a gentleman writing from Selmeiston in Sussex: "A few days ago I was speaking to a man here about his little boy, who looked pale and delicate. He said, 'Ah! you'll see a difference in him in a few weeks time, when the warm weather comes and brings the Danish blood out of him. When he's put on his Dane's skin he'll look very different. You'll always notice these Danes look rather peckish in winter time.' On inquiry I found that by 'Dane's skin' he meant freckled skin. His grandmother had told him that freckles were a sign of Danish blood. A woman informed me that she had always understood that red-

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haired people were Danes. Our Sussex ancestors disliked the Danes, and considered a Dane's skin an appropriate ornament for a church door; and I was interested to find that Danish blood and Danish skins still haunt the Sussex dialect."

CHAPTER VI

The Bars of London—Temple Bar—Royalty and the Bar—Proposed new One — Temple Bar built — Description — “The City Golgotha” — Royal “Ceremonial — Its proposed and final Demolition—Its Fate—The Griffin—“Alice in Blunderland.”

ALL around the walls of Old London was fen and common land, which was made use of by the citizens, and the bounds thereof were defined by posts, and probably a chain, which were called bars. Thus we have Temple Bar, Holborn Bar, Spital Bar, Red Cross Bar, and the bars without Aldersgate and Aldgate, and the domain thus defined was called the liberties of the City. We have no cognizance of the exact time when these bars were erected, and there is very little doubt that they were necessitated by some kind of litigation, as the Abbot of Westminster claimed all the fen up to Ludgate, but some can be traced back to the twelfth century, as, in the *Calendar of St. Paul's Documents* (p. 25), mention is made of land in the possession of the canons without the bar of Bishopsgate.

Herbert, in his *London before the Great Fire* (vol. iii. p. 23), says the first mention of Temple Bar is in a grant dated 29th of Edward I. (A.D. 1301) to Walter le Barbour, of “a void place in the high street in the parish of St. Clement Danes, *extra Barram Novi Templi*”; and we may gather some idea of the state of the land thereabouts in 1315, when the inhabitants of Westminster petitioned Edward II., showing that the way between “la Barre du Novel Temple de Londres” and the Palace was so bad that in the rainy season they were

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greatly interrupted, especially by *thickets and bushes*. And another early mention may be found in the accounts of the Escheator for Middlesex, for 1 & 2 Edward III.: "De exitibus quorundam tenementorum extra barram Novi Templi London."

Strype tells us that "*Temple bar* is the Place where the Freedom of the City of *London*, and the Liberty of the City of *Westminster* doth part. Which Separation was antiently only Posts, Rails and a Chain; such as are now at *Holbourn*, *Smithfield* and *Whitechappel* Bars. Afterwards there was a House of Timber erected cross the Street, with a narrow Gate-way, and an Entry on the South side of it, under the House. But, since the great Fire there is erected a stately Gate, with two Posterns, on each side for the Convenience of Foot Passengers: with strong Gates to shut up in the Nights, and always good store of Watchmen, the better to prevent danger."

I am fortunate in finding in the Crace Collection a view of Old Temple Bar, *East Front*, as erected in the reign of King James I.—*Drawing made by T. H. Shepherd, from a Drawing of 1620 in the British Museum.*

But there must have been a building here previously, for Stow, in his *Annales*, tells us how on 31st May 1533, when Queen Anne Boleyn rode through the City to Westminster, that in Fleet Street "the Conduit ranne wine, claret and red, all the afternoone, so shee with all her Companie, & the Maior rode forth to Temple bar, which was newly paynted and repaired, where stood also divers singing men and children, till shee came to Westminster Hall": and on the occasions of the processions of Edward VI. and Mary the gate was beautifully adorned. Philip of Spain also passed through Temple Bar, for we find: "1 Mary, 9 June—Item y^t was agryed that Mr. Chamblyn shortelye, after that the Prynce of



OLD TEMPLE BAR—1620.

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Temple Bar

Spayne shall have passyde threwege the Citie, shall cause a good and substancial new payre of gates to be made and hanged up at Temple Barre." And again: "1 & 2 Phil. & Mary, 23 Oct.—Item yt was agreid that Mr. Chamb'leyn shall com'ytt the custody of the key of the new gates, now sett up at Temple Barre, to the cyties ten'nte, dwellynge nyer unto the saide gates, taking nev the less especial order with hyme, for the shutynge and openynge of the same gats at convenyente houres."

But this wooden building was thought too mean for a main entrance into the City of London, and on 5th May 1636 the Recorder and four Aldermen conferred with Inigo Jones as to a new gate at Temple Bar. The architect drew a plan for a very fine arch, but it was never carried out.

It is a great mistake to think that Temple Bar was destroyed by the great fire of 1666, for it stopped two doors short of St. Dunstan's Church; but it was doomed, and the King took a personal interest in its destruction, as we see by the City records: "1669. 21 Car. II., July 29. The Commissioners of Streets and Sewers, sitting at Scotland Yard, have several times proposed the opening and taking down of Temple Barr, for enlarging the streets there, and to pay the sum of £1005 out of the revenue arising by Hackney Coaches, to satisfy the City, and such as claim under them for their respective estates in the houses, and rebuilding over and adjoining to the said building, and toward the charge of taking down and rebuilding the same; to which this Court hath hitherto declined to agree to, in regard, it appears, upon a due estimate and computation, that the charge of that work will far surmount the said sum. Now, this day, the Lord Mayor made relation unto the Court that his Lordship was sent for to appear before

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his Majesty in Council, on Friday last, upon his Majesty's demand did offer his charge before mentioned, as the reason why the said Temple Bar was not taken down withal, respecting the great sum of money the City had expended towards the rebuilding their public works consumed in the dismal fire, amounting already to about £60,000, for all which they are thereby clearly indebted, and how great a sum is yet further necessary to the works remaining, with other instances of this City's weak estate and inability. But that his Majesty did nevertheless insist upon taking down of the said Barr and Buildings, and signifying his pleasure several times to that purpose, and that towards the said charge the City should accept the said £1005, but was pleased afterwards to declare that when that sum was expended, he would take care they should be further supplied, either out of the said revenue by Hackney Coaches, or otherwise, for reviving or finishing that work."

It was ordered—"That Mr. Chamberlain should receive the sum of £1005 towards the rebuilding of the said Barr."

At that time no public building in the City could be built unless Wren was architect, and accordingly to him the City fathers went, and, according to Strype, there were inscriptions over the two posterns (illegible long before the old gateway was pulled down), stating that it was "Erected, *Sir Samuel Starling being Maior*; Continued, *Sir Richard Ford, Maior*; Finished, *Sir George Waterman, Maior*"; which give us 1670 as the date of its commencement, and 1672 for its completion. As far as we can learn, its cost was £1397, 10s.

The following account of Temple Bar, written before it was pulled down, is taken, on account of its containing several particulars not elsewhere mentioned, from Noble's *Memorials of Temple Bar*:—

Temple Bar

“Temple Bar, as it at present exists, may be described as of the Corinthian Order, built of Portland stone, with one large flattened arch in the centre, and two semicircular side arches. Each façade has four Corinthian pilasters, an entablature, and arched pediment. Over the keystone of the centre arch were formerly a pair of large stone coat of arms, the City, on the City side, and the Royal, on the western. The former, however, fell down on the morning of 18 April 1828; and, luckily, without injury to any one: but the Royal Arms were removed when Mr. Bunning decorated the Bar for the Duke of Wellington’s funeral in 1852, and have not since been replaced. The supporters to these arms, which were originally placed over the extremities of the posterns (widened some years since), as also the fruit and flowers sculptured in the pediment, have also long since disappeared. Added to which casualties, the four royal statues of James the First, and his Queen, Anne of Denmark (on the City side), and Charles the First and Second (on the Westminster side), have been sadly ill used, especially the Charleses. The gates, which in Maitland’s time were closed every night, and a good store of watchmen kept, the better to prevent danger, are of oak, panelled, surmounted by carvings of festoons and fruit. They were renewed in 1806; but, viewed by the passengers of to-day, they look anything but elegant. I have seen them when cleaned and polished, and worthy of the City. Over the carriage-way, between the statues, is a small apartment, lighted by windows, looking into the Strand and Fleet Street; and this room, ‘from time immemorial,’ has been occupied by Messrs. Childs & Co., the bankers, as a ‘strong room’ for their ledgers, ranged upon shelves, and duly labelled. Mr. Timbs says the firm pay £50 per annum to the City for its use; but this rental is, I understand,

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overstated, and I know the assessment of it by the parish of St. Dunstan's is far under the amount. This room is entered from the first floor of the bank's premises, by a series of steps, iron doors, and a passage, the approach certainly carrying in one's mind the idea of it being the entrance to a prison cell, so formidable does it look."

Temple Bar has earned the appropriate, but unsavoury, cognomen of "the City Golgotha," on account of the heads of decapitated persons which were here exhibited. The first human remains which were here exhibited was a quarter of Sir Thomas Armstrong, Master of the Horse to Charles the Second, who, being found guilty of complicity in the Rye House plot, was executed at Tyburn on the 20th June 1684. His head was set up on Westminster Hall, but a portion of his body, after having been duly seethed in pitch, was impaled on a spike on Temple Bar, a practice which afterwards became so common as scarcely to attract attention. Dr. Johnson tells us how he remembered once being with Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey: "While we surveyed the Poets' Corner I said to him, '*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis*';¹ when we got to Temple Bar he stopped me, pointed to the heads upon it, and slyly whispered, '*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis*'"; an allusion to Dr. Johnson's Jacobite proclivities. The iron spikes were removed early last century, there being no further use for them.

A pleasanter memory of the old Bar is the ancient ceremony of closing the gates against the entrance of the reigning monarch, the meaning of which is the assertion by the citizens of the inviolability of their City, into which none can enter save by the permission of their Chief Magistrate. It is a somewhat elaborate ritual:

¹ Our names, perhaps, may be mixed with theirs.

Temple Bar

a herald advances from the royal cortége, and knocks at the gates; an inquiry is made as to his mission, and he replies that the King wished admission. This is duly reported to the Lord Mayor, who instantly grants the request, and the gates are thrown open. Immediately after the monarch enters within the City he is met by the Lord Mayor (who on such an occasion wears his Earl's robe) and all his civic staff. The Lord Mayor then presents to the King the City Keys¹ on a velvet cushion; they are just touched, and returned to him with some remark that they could not be in better keeping. The pearl scabbarded sword is then presented and returned in the same manner, after which the Lord Mayor, bearing the said sword, immediately precedes the King in his procession during the whole time he is in the City. Now there is no longer Temple Bar, stalwart policemen, holding a cord, form a cordon across the road, close to the Griffin, and the same ceremony is gone through, with the exception that there are no gates to knock at.

Temple Bar was once nearly doomed to destruction. An extremely energetic alderman, William Pickett, at the request of several inhabitants of Fleet Street and Ludgate Hill, in 1787, presented a petition to the Court of Common Council praying the removal of the impediments to the free access to the City. This was referred to a Committee, before whom Mr. Pickett appeared, and proposed three resolutions, one of which was the destruction of Temple Bar, which was only lost by a majority of one, the voting being four to five. He brought before the Court of Common Council a motion "to consider the expediency of applying to Parliament for

¹ The gates no longer existing, these keys, which are very large, and of silver, are no longer used, but they may be seen in the City Museum at Guildhall.

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money to defray the expense to render the avenue to the City more commodious," but it was rejected by thirty-six to thirty. He then brought the question before the Livery in Common Hall on 29th September, when they met to elect a Lord Mayor, but he could not find a seconder. A paper war for and against the Bar ensued, one of the best pasquinades, written by a Mr. John Williams, is as follows:—

*"The Metropolitan Prophecy, Written on the Report of
Removing Temple Bar in 1788.*

"If that Gate is pulled down, 'twixt the Court and the City,
You'll blend in one mass, prudent, worthless, and witty.
If you league Cit and Lordling, as brother and brother,
You'll break order's chain, and they'll war with each other.
Like the Great Wall of China, it keeps out the Tartars
From making irruptions, where industry barterers.
Like Samson's Wild Foxes they'll fire your houses,
And madden your spinsters, and cousen your spouses.
They'll destroy in one sweep both the Mart and the Forum,
Which your fathers held dear, and their fathers before them."

Temple Bar finally succumbed to time: in March 1868 it was reported dangerous; and as, in the following July, it began to sink, it was shored up. Thus it remained until its removal was voted by the Council on 27th September 1876, but even then the workmen did not begin their work of destruction till 10th December 1877. The removal began on 2nd January 1878, and the last stones were taken away 13th June 1879. The stones were all numbered, so that the Bar could be easily rebuilt, and many were the sites suggested, but the stones lay neglected until, in June 1887, they were given to Sir Henry Meux, the brewer, and the Bar was re-erected by him, so as to form an entrance to his seat at Theobald's Park, near Cheshunt, in November 1888, and there it still remains.

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KING EDWARD VII. GOING TO ST. PAUL'S TO RETURN THANKS FOR PEACE, 8TH JUNE 1902.

Alice in Blunderland

Yet the boundary between the two Cities of Westminster and London must be shown somehow, and the City Architect contrived the Memorial which now stands in the centre of the road on the site of the old Bar—which was inaugurated by Prince Leopold (Duke of Albany), 8th November 1880.

This Memorial has not met with unqualified praise; in fact, the stradling and grotesque Griffin with the corkscrew tail has been everybody's laughing-stock. Perhaps the best bit of satire written about it is the following, taken from *Punch*, 30th October 1880:—

"ALICE IN BLUNDERLAND.

"The Gryphon carefully slid off its pedestal, and sat down beneath the hoarding. Then it chuckled: 'What fun!' said the Gryphon, half to itself, half to Alice.

" 'What is the fun?' said Alice.

" 'Well, I can't exactly tell you,' said the Gryphon, 'for I'm only just finished, you know, and I'm fresh to it. But there's a joke somewhere—that I'm certain of; for when I'm up there I see them laughing on the tops of the omnibuses.'

" 'Dear me!' said Alice, getting quite interested. 'Then, it must be a very good joke indeed.'

" 'Well, if it is, *I* didn't make it—there!' retorted the Gryphon, quite annoyed. Then it added, more thoughtfully, 'Unless it's the sheet. But you'd better ask the Mansion House Turtle. It's more likely it's *his*. He's always making 'em. He knows a thing or two, he does,' added the Gryphon with a wink.

" 'Then, if he's a wise Turtle,' rejoined Alice, 'he's sure to know his own joke, isn't he? We'll ask him.'

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"At that moment the Mansion House Turtle emerged from Fleet Street, and joined the party. He gave a satisfied look at the unfinished Memorial as he passed, and then took his place on an inverted wheelbarrow.

"'Well!' he said, rubbing his hands together complacently, 'we're a getting on *very* nicely, eh?'

"'I'm sure I'm very glad to hear it,' said Alice. 'But, *what* is it?'

"'Yes, what's your joke?' added the Gryphon,—'what's the fun of my sitting up there with a shield, staring at the back of St. Clement Danes, and obstructing the omnibuses?'

"'Well, I never!' said the Mansion House Turtle. 'You're a grateful one, you are! Why, you've never been on such a big 'orse in your life before. There's the Queen and the Prince on the tier below you; and the lot of you right in the middle of the road, where everybody can't help running right agin you! Obstructing omnibuses, indeed! Why, yer don't know what civic dignity means!'

"'I don't think they *ought* to stand in the middle of the road,' said Alice, plucking up courage as she gave a glance at the cumbersome pile of scaffolding that blocked the already contracted thoroughfare, 'and I should pull all that thing down *now*—every stone of it. I call it stupid; and it is dreadfully in the way.'

"'Stupid!' retorted the Mansion House Turtle, getting quite green; 'why, it cost twelve thousand pounds!'¹

"'Well, *that's* stupid,' said the Gryphon, 'at all events!'

"'You be quiet,' continued the Mansion House Turtle, 'and let me explain. You don't understand.

¹ £11,550.

Alice in Blunderland

Talk of being in the way, why, it will be a relief to the traffic.'

"'You mean a *bas relief*, I suppose?' suggested Alice; 'and I'm sure it will all look very paltry in front of those big Law Courts.'

"'Paltry?' said the Mansion House Turtle. 'Why, it's the very thing. It will scale 'em!'

"'Well, BIRCH scaled me,' said the Gryphon, chuckling; 'and I wonder how *he* looks now that job's done? It strikes me he had much better have left me a block.'

"'Yes,' said Alice, reflecting; 'I've always heard that the block system was capital.'

"'Nothing to the block-head system,' replied the Gryphon, giving a look at the Mansion House Turtle. 'And talking of capital, *that'll* show you how to get through it!'

"'You be quiet,' said the Mansion House Turtle angrily, 'and attend to your motter.'

"The Gryphon chuckled to himself, and looked up at his shield.

"'By the bye,' said Alice, making out the municipal legend slowly, 'that reminds me. — What is *Domine dirige nos*'?

"'What the omnibuses will say when they will come tilting on to me in a fog,' said the Gryphon. 'Pon my word, it won't be safe! I don't like it!'

"'Then,' said Alice with warmth, rising as she spoke, 'I shall certainly write to the *Times*.'

"'And so shall I,' said the Gryphon; 'for *I* can tell my own tale. Come along, let's master the subject.'

"It offered its arm to Alice, and they walked slowly down the Strand.

"'Humph!' said the Mansion House Turtle, looking after them, 'to be master of the subject's one thing, but

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to be master of the situation's another. Write your 'eads off, if you like, you won't stop me.'

"And the Mansion House Turtle waddled off towards the City for a plate of his own soup."

The Memorial was designed by Mr. Horace Jones, the City Architect; the Griffin was the work of Mr. C. B. Birch, A.R.A.; and the figures of the Queen and the Prince of Wales, by Mr. Boehm, R.A.

CHAPTER VII

Strype's Description of St. Clement's Parish—St. Clement—St. Clement and the Trinity House—Folk-lore—The Church—Its Altar-piece—Dr. Johnson—Riotous Neighbourhood—Gay's Description—Bulkheads—Crockford.

STRYPE gives us the boundaries of St. Clement's parish as it existed in 1720—which can be very easily identified by reference to the first Ordnance Survey Map (25 inches to the mile) which accompanies this book. In his time, he says: "The parish of *St. Clement Danes* is large, well built, and inhabited by many Persons both of the Nobility and Gentry, as well as rich Tradesmen: Where also many Noblemen's Seats stood, as *Essex House*, *Arundel House*, etc., tho' now pulled down, and improved in Rents, by building them into fair Courts and Squares.

"To give the *Girt Line*, or present Bounds of this Parish, I must in abundance of Places run through, or cross Houses, nay, long Piles of Buildings, as doth appear by the Map of the Parish. I shall begin at the West End of *Portugal Row* in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, where the Parish Stone Mark is set up; and from thence it runs across the back sides of the Houses in *Portugal Row*, taking in the *Playhouse*, and the Stablings, into the new Court in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, almost to the Pump placed at the *Pallisado* Pales by the Garden; and from thence streight cross the Court and the row of new Buildings into *Shear Lane*, and down the same to the Gate by *Temple Bar*; taking in all the West side thereof. Then it runs from *Temple Bar*, cross to the *Cock Alehouse* on the other side of the Way, and so to the River *Thames*;

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taking in all the Buildings except the *Temple*: Which the Templers and Baristers claim a Jurisdiction unto. So that it passes from the *Cock Alehouse* in the Street side, unto all the Buildings to the *Palsgrave's Head Court*, which it takes in, and so down into *Devereux Court*, with all *Essex* Buildings, on both sides, to the River *Thames*; Then along the Banks of the River from *Essex Stairs* unto *Strand Bridge*; and there it turns Northwards, taking in the East side, with part of the West side, at the upper end; where it joins to the Garden Wall of *Somerset House*. Which Buildings it crosses, and so up to *Three Helmet Court*, over against the *May Pole* in the *Strand*, and there it crosseth the High Street to the Stone Cutter's by the *Bell Inn*. Hence thro' the said Inn, and crosses *Wich Street* to *May Pole Alley*; from whence it passeth by *Craven House* on the East side of *Drury Lane*, to the Cheesemongers two doors on this side of the *Horshoe Tavern*; and thence it crosses the Houses on the back side of *Princes Street*, and so cross *Stanhope Street*, and the Tallow Chandlers, with the other jetting out House, and then runs down the south side of *Dukes Street* unto the House where the Parish Stone Mark is set up; and from this House it crosses the Houses into *Bear Yard*, and so into *Sheffield Street*, by *Clare Market*, next the Oyl Shop; where it crosses to the Glaziers, and so through the Houses; and again crossing by the sign of the *Black Jack*, unto the Parish Stone Mark, on the back side of *Portugal Row*, where I began. And this is the *Girt Line* of the Parish, which lieth encircled together. But there is a considerable Part of the Parish separate from the rest, and that part begins at *Wimbleton House* in the *Strand*, over against *Dutchy Lane*, and so runs to the Corner of *Exeter Exchange*, and from thence up *Burleigh Street*, taking in *Exeter Court*, with *Exchange Alley*, and the back

Saint Clement

Buildings against *Exeter Street*, with all the East side of *Burleigh Street*, except two or three Houses by the corner of *Exeter Street*. Then again from the corner of the said *Exchange*, it runs cross the *Strand*, taking in *Fountain Court* down to the River *Thames*, with all *Beauford Buildings*, and the East side of the new Street called *Cecil Street*, built out of Great *Salisbury House*: all which Buildings it takes in, and this is the extent of this Parish."

The St. Clement to whom the church is dedicated was a follower and coadjutor of the Apostle St. Paul, who, writing to the Philippians (iv. 3), requires them to be mindful of the flock and their teachers, and distinguishes Clement by name—"help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, and with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers." He followed St. Paul to Rome, where he heard St. Peter preach, and was instructed in his school. According to Tertullian, St. Peter ordained him bishop; by which some understand that he made him a bishop of nations, to preach the gospel in many countries; others think, with Epiphanius, that he made him his vicar at Rome, with an episcopal character to govern that Church during his absence in his frequent missions. After the martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul, St. Linus was appointed Bishop of Rome; and, after eleven years, was succeeded by St. Cletus. Upon his demise, A.D. 91, St. Clement was placed in the Apostolic chair, and it is said he occupied it for nine years, eleven months, and twenty days. He managed to escape the persecution of Domitian, but is generally believed to have been martyred in the year 100, during Trajan's persecution. Alban Butler, in his *Lives of the Saints*, simply states his belief that he was martyred; but the *Golden Legend*, and Ribadeneira, the Spanish Jesuit, in his *Lives of the*

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Saints (Part II. p. 295), say that he was drowned, with an anchor round his neck. The latter authority says: "The Emperor Trajan, finding Clement firm and constant in the Confession of Jesus Christ, and that he could, by no means, persuade him to adore the Gods, he commanded the Executioners to carry him into the deep sea; and, with a heavy anchor tied to his neck, to cast him into it, that the Christians might not reverence him as a Saint. The Christians made their prayer; and, immediately, the sea retired for the space of three miles, or a league, in such sort that they could go into it for all that space, as upon the dry land. They found in it a Chapel, or little Church, made by the hands of Angels; and, within the Church, a chest of stone, in which was the body of St. Clement; and, by it, the anchor with which he had been cast into the sea." There is a variant to this legend, in which the Saint had a stone tied to his neck; but the anchor is the symbol of St. Clement, and is reproduced many times in this Church of St. Clement Danes, where it appears on the weather cock, on the beadle's staves, and it is on all the boundary stones of the parish.

There is also a connection with this Saint and the Corporation of the Trinity, on whom devolves the duty of lighting our coasts. This Corporation was founded by Sir Thomas Spert, in 1512, as an "association for piloting ships," and its first domicile was at Deptford (now done away with), and its title was "The Master, Wardens, and Assistants of the Guild, Fraternity, or Brotherhood of the most Glorious and Undivided Trinity, and of Saint Clement, in the Parish of Deptford Strond, in the County of Kent." A portion of its charter runs thus: "We, on account of the sincere and entire love, and likewise devotion

St. Clement's Day

which we bear and have towards the most glorious and undividable Trinity, and also to Saint Clement the Confessor, have granted and given licence, for us and our heirs, as much as in us is, to our beloved liege people and subjects, the shipmen, or mariners of our realm of England; that they, or their heirs, to the praise and honour of the said most glorious and undividable Trinity and Saint Clement, may, of new, begin, erect, ordain, found, unite and establish a certain guild, or perpetual fraternity of themselves and other persons, as well men as women, in the parish church of Deptford Strond, in our County of Kent."

There is some connection with this Saint and apples, for in Worcester and Staffordshire, on his festival (23rd November) children go round calling at every house, and begging for apples, at the same time singing this doggerel:

"Clemany! Clemany! Clemany mine!
A good red apple and a pint of wine,
Some of your mutton and some of your veal,
If it is good, pray give me a deal:
If it is not, pray give some salt.
Butler, butler, fill your bowl;
If thou fill'st of the best,
The Lord'll send your soul to rest;
If thou fill'st it of the small,
Down goes butler, bowl and all.
Pray, good mistress, send to me
One for Peter, one for Paul,
One for Him who made us all,
Apple, pear, plum, or cherry,
Any good thing to make us merry;
A bouncing buck and a velvet chair,
Clement comes but once a year;
Off with the pot, and on with the pan,
A good red apple, and I'll be gone."

He was also the patron saint of blacksmiths; and "Old Clem's" day used to be well observed. Dickens,

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in *Great Expectations*, has not forgotten "Old Clem" in connection with the forge.

We have no means of ascertaining when the first church dedicated to this Saint was built in the Strand: the earliest mention of it that I can find, is that Henry II. gave it to the Knights Templars, in whose hands it continued until the dissolution of their Order, when it was conferred upon the Prior and Canons of the Holy Sepulchre, who disposed of the same, together with some lands in the parish, to Walter, Bishop of Exeter, about the year 1324, in whose and his successor's possession it continued till the year 1547, when Edward VI. granted it to Edward, Duke of Somerset; but, upon his attainder, it reverting to the Crown, the said King, in 1552, conferred it upon Sir Thomas Palmer; but, it again devolving to the Crown, Queen Elizabeth granted it to William, Lord Burleigh, whose descendant, the Marquess of Exeter, is now the patron of the living.

Neither Stow nor Strype tell us a word of this—all we can learn from them relates to the repairs. "The Care of those that, by an annual Succession, have the Charge and Oversight of this Church, hath continually been such, as upon the least Defect, or Failing, either in Strength, or Beauty, it hath instantly been employed, both in Repairs and Adornment.

"And first, we begin with that great costly Repair, in the Year of our Lord God 1608. At which time, upon six and twenty Foot of the Church yard in Length, and twenty Foot in Breadth (taking in at the East End of the Church) they built up a very fair Chancel. The Charge of this Building and Repairing, amounting to the Sum of £1000 and upwards.

"In the Year of our Lord 1616, there was laid out upon the Steeple, in repairing and enlarging of it, with

St. Clement's Church

some other needful things in the Church, the sum of £496.

"In the Year of our Lord God 1631, some Parts of this Church were again repaired, and the whole Body covered with a fair and beautiful Rough cast, the Charge of it £40.

"In the Year 1632, and this present Year 1633, this Church was, within, throughout richly and very worthily beautified. The charge of it £50.

"The sum of all these Repairs, all being the sole cost of the Parishioners, £1586."

Strype, writing in 1720, adds a note: "This Church hath lately been new built, and so hath the Steeple also. There is an extraordinary fine Pulpit wrought with Carved Work. The Ceiling is arched with Fretwork. A good organ."¹

The old church was pulled down in 1680, and the present church was built in 1682, after designs by, and under the direction of, Sir Christopher Wren, who made no charge for his services. In 1719 the present steeple was built, and the whole edifice was extensively repaired and restored in 1839. There is a remarkably fine peal of ten bells, which were cast in 1693. They are made immortal in that childhood's game,

"Oranges and lemons
Say the Bells of St. Clemen's";

but they do not say that now; they only chime "Hanover" and "the Lass o' Gowrie" at 9, 12; and 5 daily. The church is somewhat awkwardly situated, standing askew in the road, because of its being placed scrupulously east and west. At one time it had an altarpiece painted by Kent, a then fashionable painter, but in 1725 a peremptory order was sent by Dr. Gibson, then

¹ One of Father Smith's.

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Bishop of London, ordering its instant removal, on the plea that it contained portraits of the Pretender's wife and children. Mr. Diprose, in his Account of St. Clement Danes, says that this picture "was for some years one of the ornaments of the Coffee room of the Crown and Anchor, whence it was removed to the vestry room of the Church, over the old almshouses in the church yard. After 1803, it was transported to the new Vestry room on the north side of the church yard, where it remains at the present time (1868)."

We get a contemporary account of this picture in the *Weekly Journal*, 28th August 1725: "The Altar-piece of the Church of St. Clement Danes, being a whimsical representation variously explain'd, some finding in it St. Cecilia and her Harp, and some, Madame de St. George and her eldest Son; and the Generality of People agreeing it was not a proper Decoration for the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, upon Complaint made to the Bishop of London, at his last Visitation of the said Church, we hear that his Lordship wisely ordered it to be took down, in order to secure the Solemnity of the Place and Worship, and preserve a right Understanding among the Parishioners."

In the north gallery is a pew which is said to have been occupied by Dr. Johnson, in which is the following inscription, engraved on a brass plate:—"In this pew, and beside this pillar, for many years attended divine service, the celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson, the philosopher, the poet, the great lexicographer, the profound moralist, and chief writer of his time. Born 1709, died 1784. In the remembrance and honour of noble faculties, nobly employed, some inhabitants of St. Clement Danes have placed this slight memorial, A.D. 1851."

Stow tells us that, "Here, about this Church, and

St. Clement's

in the parts adjoining, were frequent Disturbances, by reason of the Unthrifths of the Inns of Chancery, who were so unruly a Nights, walking about to the Disturbance and Danger of such as passed along the Streets, that the Inhabitants were fain to keep Watches. In the year 1582, the Recorder himself with six more of the honest Inhabitants stood by *St. Clement's Church*, to see the Lanthorn hanged out; and to observe if he could meet with any of those outrageous Dealers. About seven at Night, they saw young Mr. *Robert Cecil*, the Lord Treasurer's Son (who was afterwards Secretary of State to the Queen) pass by the Church; and, as he past, gave them a civil Salute. At which they said, *Lo! you can see how a Nobleman's Son can use himself, and how he putteth off his Cap to poor Men. Our Lord bless him.* This Passage the Recorder wrote in a Letter to his Father, adding, 'Your Lordship hath cause to thank God for so vertuous a Child.'

Gay, in his *Trivia* (1716?) writes very graphically of this spot:

"Where the fair Columns of Saint *Clement* stand,
Whose straiten'd Bounds encroach upon the *Strand*;
Where the low Penthouse bows the Walker's Head,
And the rough Pavement wounds the yielding Tread;
Where not a Post protects the narrow Space,
And strung in Twines, Combs dangle in thy Face;
Summon at once thy Courage, rouse thy Care,
Stand firm, look back, be resolute, beware.
Forth issuing from steep Lanes, the *Collier's* Steeds
Drag the black Load; another Cart succeeds,
Team follows Team, Crouds heap'd on Crouds appear,
And wait impatient, 'till the Road grow clear.
Now all the Pavement sounds with trampling Feet,
And the mixt Hurry barricades the Street.
Entangled here, the Waggon's lengthen'd Team
Crack the tough Harness; Here a pond'rous Beam
Lies over-turn'd athwart; For Slaughter fed,
Here lowing Bulls raise their horned Head.
Now Oaths grow loud, with Coaches Coaches jar,
And the smart Blow provokes the sturdy War

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From the high Box they whirl the Thong around,
And with the twining Lash their Shins resound :
Their Rage ferments, more dang'rous Wounds they try,
And the Blood gushes down their painful Eye,
And now on Foot the frowning Warriors light,
And with their pond'rous Fists renew the Fight ;
Blow answers Blow, their Cheeks are smear'd with Blood,
'Till down they fall ; and, grappling, roll in Mud.
So when two Boars, in wild *Ytene*¹ bred,
Or, on *Westphalia's* fatt'ning Chest-nuts fed,
Gnash their sharp Tusks ; and, rous'd with equal Fire,
Dispute the Reign of some luxurious Mire ;
In the black Flood they wallow o'er and o'er,
Till their arm'd Jaws distill with Foam and Gore."

In the accompanying illustration of the South Prospect of St. Clement Danes, 1711, we see the old penthouses or bulkheads, and are carried back in imagination to the time of which Gay wrote.

Well within the memory of man, every shopkeeper carrying on business in the City of London was compelled to be a freeman of the City: this rule was infringed by the merchants, who would not qualify for the occupation of their offices, and the rule is now obsolete. Naturally those traders who were not freemen would gather close to the different Bars, and Temple Bar was no exception to the rule. At this particular spot some of the houses were very old, and there is no reason to doubt but that this "Last Bulkhead in London" was as old as it represented itself to be. The word bulkhead was used indifferently for the "bulk" or stall, or for the penthouse which covered and protected it. The word "bulk" applied to a stall is very old. In *Praise of Musicke*, p. 44 (1586), we read, "the tailor on his bulk, the shomaker at his last." In Shakspeare's *Coriolanus*, Act II. sc. i. (ed. 1607), "Stalls, Bulkes, Windowes, Are smother'd vp." And in Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker* we find them put to a very different use:

¹ New Forest in Hampshire.



ST. CLEMENT DANES—1711.

PUBLIC
STANDSWORTH
CLARK

The Last Bulkhead

“During the heats of summer, he commonly took his repose upon a bulk.”

This particular shop, which had been long in the



LAST BULKHEAD IN LONDON.

possession of generations of fishmongers, was pulled down in 1846. It was simply a timber frame filled up with lath and plaster, and originally had but one gable ;

Old Time Aldwych

but as we see it here it had been altered. The penthouse projected well over the pavement, and was furnished with a gutter, the water pouring out at each end. That this was a very inconvenient arrangement Gay bears witness :

“And Spouts on heedless Men their Torrents pour.”

“And ev’ry Penthouse streams with hasty Show’rs.”

“While you, with Hat unloop’d, the Fury dread
Of Spouts high-streaming.”

It was at this house that William Crockford (whose gambling establishment was so well known in the early years of the last century) was born in 1775, his father being a fishmonger in a small way of business. His father dying when he was young, the business was carried on, first by his mother, and afterwards by himself; but he soon took to betting and gambling, became a proficient at cards, and was more particularly skilled in the games of whist, piquet, and cribbage. He frequented the better kind of sporting houses in the neighbourhood of St. James’s market, where the latter game more especially was much played, and for large sums, by opulent tradesmen and others. He made some money at gambling, became connected with a gaming-house in King Street, St. James’s, and then he turned his attention to horse-racing, frequenting Tattersalls as a bookmaker, and becoming the owner of racehorses. He had a splendid mansion and grounds at Newmarket, where he trained his stud, and at one time owned the celebrated horse Sultan, the sire of Bay Middleton, who won the Derby in 1836. But the roguery at Newmarket was too much even for him, and he sold his racing stud, and confined himself to his London businesses.

In 1827 he began building his new Club-house in St. James Street, the site being now occupied by the

Crockford

Devonshire Club (No. 50); workmen were engaged on it day and night, and it was opened in the latter part of the year. The number of members belonging to the Club was from 1000 to 1200, exclusive of the privilege or right of *entrée*, permitted to ambassadors and foreigners of distinction during their diplomatic sojourn or temporary visit to this country; and the Duke of Wellington, although he did not gamble, was one of the earliest members. The annual subscription was twenty-five pounds; and for this the members had the most luxurious club of its time, with wines and viands at a very low rate, although the latter were presided over by the celebrated *chef*, Ude, to whom Crockford paid a salary of £1200.

It is said that, during the first two seasons, Crockford must have netted about £300,000, but his expenses were heavy, the item of dice alone (at about a guinea a pair) was £2000 per annum: three new pairs being provided for the opening play each night, and very often as many more called for by players, or put down by Crockford himself with a view to change a player's luck.

Crockford was bound by his agreement with his committee to put down a bank, or capital, of £5000, nightly, *during the sitting of Parliament*, and he was not permitted to terminate the play until a stated hour, as long as any of that £5000 remained.

He died at his mansion in Carlton House Terrace, on 25th May 1844, aged 69. He died a very wealthy man, although he experienced very heavy losses in sundry speculations. A contemporary says of him: "The entire property amassed by Mr. Crockford must have been immense, regard being had to the fact that, exclusive of a sum of money, amounting to nearly half a million sterling, bequeathed to his widow, he is confidently reported to have distributed amongst his children, about

Old Time Aldwych

two years ago, a sum nearly equalling if not exceeding that amount: a circumstance not at all improbable in a man of foresight, like Mr. Crockford, and one which will fully account, as well for the bequest of the whole bulk of his remaining fortune to his widow, as for such bequest being absolute, and free from all condition."

CHAPTER VIII

Butcher Row—Description—"The Beaux Disaster"—Where the "Gunpowder Plot" was supposed to be hatched—Duke of Sully's House—The "Red Lattice"—Nat. Lee—Johnson at an Eating-House—Alderman Pickett and Improvement—Pickett Place—Its Failure—Its Lottery.

FROM about this spot, right up to St. Clement's Church-yard, was a block of houses, forming a long obtuse-angled triangle, called Butcher Row, one side of which faced the roadway of the Strand; and the block itself formed a lane, sometimes called "The Pass," or "the Straits of St. Clement's," frequently alluded to in the *Spectator* and *Tatler*. The sides and west end contained shops of different sorts, the most respectable facing the Strand. Butcher Row, properly so called, originated in a meat market, granted in the 21st of Edward I. to Walter le Barbour, for the convenience of the *foreign* butchers, as they were termed, *i.e.* of those persons who bought meat from the country, in carts, and sold it just without the bounds of the City liberties. They were first stationed in stands or shambles, as may yet be seen in the country; but before, and in the time of Elizabeth, houses were built there, chiefly of wood and plaster, with overhanging storeys, and of various heights.

It was a most unsavoury place, as is testified by Malcolm in his *Londinium Redivivum*, where he relates his personal recollections of the "Row": "When the improvements intended in the vicinity of St. Clement's are completed, the neighbourhood will be highly respectable, and the houses remarkably large and handsome.

Old Time Aldwych

A stranger who had visited London in 1790, would, on his return, in 1804, be astonished to find a spacious area (with the Church nearly in the centre) on the site of Butcher's Row and some other passages undeserving of the name of streets, which were composed of those wretched fabrics, overhanging their foundations, the receptacles of dirt in every corner of their projecting

'The BEAUX DISASTER.'



*Ye Swarts, whose threat lies in deep
And warning by a Glass Disaster,
Who a Popin' eye, & all round Long
Featured with Butchers to engage*

*But then would it different to know
Nicer, having poor, & little on a Hook,
While poor Disgrace, exposed entire,
The Butchers shout, & Ladies stare.*

*Butter, as strong ye tips must strike, &
Now can, you think, ye fair will like you
Women of loose, in, Men despise.
The Butcher, they in, & look's prize.*

stories, the bane of ancient London, where the Plague, with all its attendant horrors, frowned destruction on the miserable inhabitants, reserving its forces for the attacks of each returning summer. I never passed through the filth of those places without fancying the dreadful Cross on the doors, where it undoubtedly had often really appeared." We get an excellent view of

Gunpowder Plot

the interior economy of Butcher's Row in the accompanying illustration, which is taken from a print of 1770. It is called "The Beaux Disaster."

"Ye Smarts, whose Merit lies in Dress,
Take warning by a Beaux Distress,
Whose Pigmy Size, & ill-tun'd Rage
Ventur'd with Butchers to engage.

But they, unus'd Affronts to brook,
Have hung poor Fribble on a Hook,
While, foul Disgrace! expos'd in Air,
The Butchers shout & Ladies stare.

Satyr¹ so strong, ye Fops, must strike you,
How can you think y^e Fair will like you?
Women of Sense in Men despise
The Anticks they in Monkeys prize."

These old houses, however, were very picturesque, as we see in this print of 1798, "Old Houses in the Butcher Row" (see next page).

"The right hand corner house in this view, which stood on the East side of St. Clement's Lane, near Clement's Inn, and was taken down on 30th March 1798, has been suggested to have been the House in which the horrid Conspiracy to destroy the King and his children and Parliament, by Gunpowder, was determined upon and sworn; and a book entitled *The Gunpowder Treason*, prefaced by . . . Bishop of Lincoln (reprinted 1679), identified it as such; but, in respect to the suggestion, it appears, on referring to the book, that the Conspirator Thomas Winter confessed that Catesby, Percy, Wright, Guy Vaux, and himself met merely 'behind St. Clement's' (without any further description of the place), where they administered to each other the oath of Secrecy; and, after, received the Sacrament 'in the next room.' On this ground, therefore, the identity of the House is still uncertain, and the above

¹ Satire.

Old Time Aldwych

houses are inserted only as curious specimens of ancient modes of building in the metropolis."

One of the finest old houses in Butcher Row was Beaumont House,—or, as it was commonly called, "The Duke



OLD HOUSES IN BUTCHER ROW—1798.

of Sully's House," a large mansion-like house,—which in later years had been divided into two tenements. It was inhabited by Christopher Harley, Comte Beaumont, who was the resident envoy from the French Court. Here, for one night, was lodged the famous Duc de Sully

Visit of the Duc de Sully

(at that time Marquis de Rosny), who, in 1603, had been appointed ambassador extraordinary from Henri IV., King of France, to congratulate James I. on his accession to the English throne. On that occasion the office of Master of the Ceremonies was first instituted, and given, with a yearly salary of £200, to Sir Lewis



BEAUMONT HOUSE, BUTCHER ROW—1797.

Lewkenor, who, accompanied by Comte Beaumont, attended the Marquis on his landing at Dover. The arrangements for his reception were very defective; and yet more so for that of his return, when he had a suite of upwards of two hundred gentlemen. The following passage, in the *Memoirs of Sully*, renders the fact of his lodging here unquestionable:—"As for myself, I sup'd

Old Time Aldwych

and lay at Beaumont's, and din'd there the next day, for so short a time had not been sufficient to procure and prepare me lodgings, until the Palace of Arundel, which was destin'd for me, could be got ready ; but this greatly embarrass'd my retinue, which could not be all lodg'd in Beaumont's house ; and, therefore, apartments were sought in the neighbourhood." The ambassador's own accommodation could not have been particularly commodious, as the rooms were small and low—four, six, and eight upon a floor, and lit only by casement windows. The ceilings were traversed by large unwrought beams, in different directions ; and a well staircase, illumined only by a skylight, ran up the middle, in the rudest style. On its exterior front were several roses and crowns, fleur-de-lys, dragons, and other ornaments, together with the date 1581, twice repeated. It was pulled down in 1802, when Butcher's Row was demolished, and this is the date of the illustration. There were other picturesque old houses, as we may see by the accompanying illustration, but these have no history ; they were drawn 1797-98.

There were several public-houses in Butcher's Row—one of them rejoicing in the sign of the "Red Lattice." Steele, in No. 87 of the *Tatler* (29th October 1709), mentions this house. Speaking of a letter from a serjeant in the footguards dated "from the Camp before Mons," he says : "It is directed 'To Serjeant Cabe, in the Coldstream regiment of foot-guards, at the red lettice, in the Butcher Row, near Temple bar.'" This red lattice was so common a fixture to an alehouse that they became synonymous, and continued so until the beginning of the eighteenth century ; and after they disappeared from the windows, they were adopted as signs. Take the following example from the *Sessions of Peace*

The Red Lattice

Register: "2 Sep. 9. James 1. It was ordered that Robert Marshe, who keepeth an Alehouse in Fynnsburye



THE LAST OF BUTCHER ROW—1798.

Fieldes, near the Dog-house, shalbe forthwith dismissed from victulinge, and the Red Lettice painted on the

Old Time Aldwych

wall, to be presently defaced, for divers misdemeanours committed in his house."

Oldys, the biographer and antiquary, mentions a curious public-house, in connection with Nathaniel Lee, the actor and playwright. He says that Lee, "returning one night from the Bear and Harrow, in Butcher Row, through Clare Market, to his lodgings in Duke Street, overladen with wine, he fell down on the ground, as some say; according to others, on a bulk, and was killed, or stifled in the snow. He was buried in the parish church of St. Clement's Danes, aged about thirty-five years." It is mentioned in Strype's Stow, "Bear and Harrow Court, so called from such a sign, a noted Eating House, at the Entrance into it."

Whether this was the eating-house in which Boswell found Johnson, I do not know, but the class of house could not have been very bad, if either the biographer or the philosopher patronised it. "Happening to dine at Clifton's eating-house in Butcher Row, I was surprised to see Johnson come in and take his seat at another table. The mode of dining, or rather, being fed, at such houses in London, is well known to many to be peculiarly unsocial, as there is no ordinary or united company, but each person has his own mess, and is under no obligation to hold any intercourse with any one. A liberal and full-minded man, however, who loves to talk, will break through this churlish and unsocial restraint. Johnson and an Irish gentleman got into a dispute concerning the cause of some part of mankind being black. 'Why, Sir (said Johnson), it has been accounted for in three ways: either by supposing that they are the posterity of Ham, who was cursed; or that God at first created two kinds of men, one black, and another white; or that by the heat of the sun, the skin is scorched, and so acquires a sooty hue. The matter has been much canvassed

Alderman Pickett

among naturalists, but has never been brought to any certain issue.' What the Irishman said is totally obliterated from my mind ; but I remember he became very warm and intemperate in his expressions ; upon which Johnson rose, and quietly walked away. When he had retired, his antagonist took his revenge, as he thought, by saying, ' He has a most ungainly figure, and an affectation of pomposity, unworthy of a man of genius.' "

The oasis of buildings which on one side faced the Strand, and the other formed the south side of Butcher Row, was doomed, owing principally to the exertions of Alderman Pickett, of whom we have heard in connection with Temple Bar. In 1789 he issued a pamphlet, entitled *Public Improvement, or a plan for making a convenient and handsome communication between the Cities of London and Westminster*, in which he recounted all that he had previously done in the matter, and gives and combats the objections to his scheme. Such of the objections as pertain to this improvement are as follow :—
" As the obstructions were out of the City, the Corporation had no business to interfere in their removal.—That the measure would be attended with great expence to the City, and require an immense sum at the outset ; that the funds of the Corporation were fully occupied with building the Compters, and purchasing the Mooring chains—and that Blackfriars Bridge would soon require a very large sum to repair it.—That there was a great plan of improvement throughout the City, under the consideration of Mr. Dance, the City Surveyor, which, it was hoped, would be attended to, prior to any accommodations in other parts.—That the building a number of large handsome houses West of Temple Bar, will have a tendency to draw the trade from some of the great establishments on the East side, and be prejudicial to

Old Time Aldwych

the franchises of the City of London.—That there was so much taste and refinement at the West End of the town, many persons, who now lay out their money in the City, will go there, when they have a better passage, and a better opportunity.—That the present occupiers will be greatly injured, as they will have a very small consideration for their individual interests, trade, &c., and that it will be a work of great time, to the injury and inconvenience of the public.”

At length success crowned his effort; and, on 26th June 1795, the Royal assent was given to an “Act for widening and improving the entrance into the City of London, near Temple Bar; for making a more commodious street, or passage, at Snow Hill; and for raising on the credit of the Orphan’s Fund, a sum of money for those purposes” (35 Geo. III. c. 126). So that the City did find the money after all. But Alderman Pickett did not live to see the fruition of his exertions, for he died in 1796—and the houses were not destroyed till 1797–98, and later. A good road was made round St. Clement’s Church, and the Strand considerably widened, and it was called Pickett Street, after the Alderman. Building speculators seized on the land, and from various causes were nearly ruined, as they pathetically explain in a pamphlet published in 1806, entitled *The Representation of the Leaseholders and Contractors interested in the Houses and Buildings in Pickett Street, near Temple Bar; Skinner Street, Fleet Market; and Snow Hill, with The Scheme of the proposed Lottery*. They say:

“In the years 1801 and 1802 the Committee, delegated by the Corporation of London, for carrying into execution the several Acts of Parliament for improving the entrance into the City of London at Temple Bar, and making more commodious the avenues at Snow Hill, entered into Contract with the Leaseholders for demising

Lottery Scheme

to them certain allotments of ground, to be built upon in the manner required by the Acts. At the time the Contracts were entered into, the Country was in a state of Peace, and the different materials used in buildings were considerably reduced in price, while the funded property was increased in value. These circumstances induced the Contractors to give high prices for the different allotments that were offered, not contemplating any event which might intervene to diminish their property, or to prevent them from fulfilling their Contracts.

“ Contrary, however, to their hopes, and almost immediately after the Contracts were entered into, hostilities again commenced ; in consequence of which, materials of every description advanced considerably in price, and labourers could not be obtained, by reason of the number of men taken into Government employ, for the purpose of building barracks, &c. Nor was this all. Although the works stood still, the Ground rents ran on, as well as the Interest on such Loans as the Leaseholders were compelled to obtain. To answer these demands, the Leaseholders could only resort to their Funded Property, which had fallen from £17 to 20 *per cent.* in value. These unforeseen and discouraging circumstances opposed a formidable barrier against the unceasing endeavours of the Leaseholders to fulfill their Contracts. Nevertheless, they have so far proceeded in executing the purpose of the Legislature, that the Public is benefited, and the Country in possession of a national and magnificent improvement in the very heart of the Metropolis, though evidently at the risk, and almost certain loss, of the fortunes of many individuals, the whole of the property being nearly unoccupied or undisposed of ; and which, they suggest, is owing to the magnitude of the Buildings, thus completed agreeable to Acts of Parliament, under the directions of the Corporation of London. The

Old Time Aldwych

money already expended in the different Buildings is estimated at £153,000, and has been in a dormant state ever since the year 1802."

And they proposed to get rid of their white elephant by means of a lottery, which duly came off; and being a large affair, it took three drawings, the first of which, consisting of house property at Temple Bar and Snow Hill, was drawn on 14th April 1807. The next drawing



NO. 13 PICKETT STREET.

took place on 26th April 1808, of which twenty lots, amounting in value to £104,000, were prizes ranging from the Grand Hotel, No. 9 Skinner Street, appraised at £25,000, to property worth £2500. The third and last portion, valued at £101,500, was disposed of on 4th December 1808, the chief prize being 13 Pickett Street, which had the gateway leading to Clement's Inn. There was a little roguery over this prize; for the winning ticket was bought from the registered owner, Mr. W. E.

The Lottery

Rolfe, Lottery Office-Keeper, in Skinner Street, and he had divided it into quarters, one of which was bought by Lucy Blackburne of Lynn Regis, Norfolk; and as the vendor had assured her the lot was worth £20,000, she applied to him for her fourth share. He, however, pointed out that the conditions on the back of the ticket were that the property should be put up to auction, and that, as the Act of Parliament did not specify at what date the sale should take place, he should choose his own time; and so he did—for it was not put up to auction till 16th August 1811, and this grand prize was knocked down for £4800. But when applied to for a quarter of this, he replied that it had not been sold, and that he was liable for no money until it was sold. How the affair ended, I know not.

The Lottery Offices burst into poetry over the Grand City Lottery, and Bish, who was one of the most enterprising brokers, brought out a poem of five verses on "FREEHOLDS AND FORTUNES," *by* Peter Pun. *Tune*, "Drops of Brandy." And there was a far shorter one, entitled

"THE TRADESMAN.

"The man who depends on the profits of trade,
When debts are collected, and bills are all paid,
May think himself happy to find he stands clear,
With Credit still good at the end of the year;
Or, should his endeavours, and constant attendance,
Obtain, in the end, but a small independence,
'Tis more than is likely, while many as willing
Strive hard all their lives, and can ne'er save a shilling.
How diff'rent the Chance of the Lott'ry from this,
By vent'ring a trifle, you scarcely can miss:
Your business is done, you may rise beyond bounds,
Possess'd of Ten, Twenty, or Five Thousand Pounds,
Some ground would you gain, with No Land Tax to pay?
'Tis time to look out, and get rich while you may;
New Houses you'll have, when in April they deal
Estates at Guildhall, from the City's Rich Wheel."

CHAPTER IX

New Law Courts suggested—Act passed for Building them—
The Site—Architect chosen—Description of Buildings—Its
Opening—The Walls of London—St. Clement's Well—Old
Boswell Court and its Inhabitants.

LAWYERS are proverbially a conservative body, and if proof of their being so were needed, witness the centuries in which the different Law Courts were scattered about the Metropolis, at Westminster, Lincoln's Inn, Chancery Lane, and St. Paul's. It was reserved for the nineteenth century to wake up and rectify this public scandal, by providing a Central Court of Justice, and housing all the sections of the Law under one huge building. It was a grand idea, and has been, in the main, well carried out. It was long before the idea became fact. In 1841 Sir Charles Barry designed a large and extremely classical building, which he proposed to locate in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which would have covered a third of the area; but the outcry against this site was so loud that it was abandoned. Nothing was done in the matter until 1858, when Queen Victoria ordered a Royal Commission to be issued, "for the purpose of inquiring into and reporting on the expediency of bringing into one place; or, at all events, into one neighbourhood, all the superior Courts of Law and Equity, the Divorce and Probate Court, and those of Admiralty, Bankruptcy, &c., as well as of suggesting means for providing a fit site, and erecting a building suited to the purpose in hand." The Commission reported, and recommended the site now occupied by the present Law Courts, which was then covered with

New Law Courts

a network of squalid courts, etc., which had, long since, outlived their former respectability.

Still the scheme hung fire, and in 1861 a Bill was introduced in Parliament to give effect to the recommendation of the Committee, but it came to nothing. Then it went to sleep until 1865, when two Bills were passed to give it effect: one (19th June, 28 & 29 Vict. c. 48), "An Act to supply Means towards defraying the Expenses of providing Courts of Justice, and the various Offices belonging thereto; and for other purposes." This provided that the cost should be borne: "1st, By Money to be provided by Parliament to the Extent of the Value of the Property surrendered, and of Relief to the Public by the Cessation of Rents now charged to the Public:—2nd, By a Contribution of One Million Stock, Part of a Sum of One million two hundred and ninety-one thousand six hundred and twenty-nine Pounds, Ten Shillings, Three Pounds *per Cent.* Stock, now standing in the Books of the Bank of *England*, to the Credit of an Account intituled 'Account of Securities purchased with surplus Interest arising from Securities carried to Account of Monies placed out for the Benefit and better Security of the Suitors of the High Court of Chancery,' which has arisen from the Profits of Investments, made under the Authority of Parliament at the Risk of the Public, of unemployed Cash Balances paid into the High Court of Chancery on account of individual Suitors:—3rd, By Taxation of Suitors of the Courts other than the Court of Chancery, to be accommodated in the said Building."

The other Act was also passed 19th June (28 & 29 Vict. c. 49), "An Act to enable the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings to acquire a Site for the Erection and Concentration of Courts of Justice, and of the various Offices belonging to the same."

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The site chosen is situated in three parishes, namely, St. Clement Danes, the Liberty of the Rolls, and St. Dunstan in the West, and the names of the property destroyed or affected is as follows:—Bailey's Court, Bell Yard, Boswell Court (Old), Boswell Court (New), Boswell Yard, Brick Court, Carey Street (partly), Chair Court, Clement's Court, Clement's Inn (partly), Clement's Inn (Foregate), Clement's Lane, Cromwell Place, Crown Court, Fleet Street, Hemlock Court, Horseshoe Court, Horseshoe Court (little), New Court, Newcastle Court, Pickett Place, Pickett Street, Plough Court, Robin Hood Court, Sawyer's Yard, Serle's Place, Serle's Place (Lower), Serle's Place (Middle), Ship Yard, Ship and Anchor Court, Strand, Star Court, Yates' Court. . . . Very little time was lost in putting the Act in force, and the site was cleared long before any building was commenced—in fact it is shown as being bare in the Ordnance Survey of 1873, which accompanies this book. Upwards of 400 houses were destroyed, and about 4000 persons had to turn out; but their exodus must have been for their benefit; as, take one instance, that of Yates' Court, there were six small houses, tenanted by forty-eight families, and there were, besides adults, one hundred and fifty children.

There was a Committee, called "Judges of Design," consisting of Right Hon. W. Cowper, M.P.; Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.; Right Hon. Sir A. Cockburn, Bart.; Sir Roundell Palmer, M.P.; Sir W. Stirling Maxwell, Bart., M.P.; John Shaw and George Pownall, Esquires, and they invited twelve architects to compete for the design of the new buildings. These were Messrs. H. R. Abraham; E. M. Barry, A.R.A.; Raphael Brandon; W. Burges; T. N. Deane; H. B. Garling; John Gibson; H. F. Lockwood; J. P. Seddon; G. G. Scott, R.A.; G. E. Street, A.R.A.; and Alfred Water-

Site of Law Courts

house. Mr. Gibson, however, did not compete. Each architect was to receive £800 for his design, and they were exhibited to the public, in 1868, at New Square, Lincoln's Inn. Mr. Street came out conqueror, but the choice of the judges has been much impugned on account of the general heaviness of the exterior, and the darkness, bad ventilation, and inadaptability of the interior.

The site occupies nearly eight acres, but only about six are built over, the others being left for expansion in the future. The first brick was actually laid on 30th April 1874, at the Bell Yard and Carey Street corner of the building, and we get a good notice of the New Law Courts in the *Times* of 19th May 1874:

“At length, after all the delays which have arisen to postpone the realisation of the scheme which has so long been talked of, the work of building the new ‘Palace of Justice’ on the Strand site, not only is about to be proceeded with, but—as will have been seen by the hosts of sightseers, who, by the favour of Messrs. Bull, the contractors, yesterday, witnessed from the enclosure, the Emperor of Russia’s progress to the City—has actually commenced. The site, as all Londoners are aware, has been cleared for many years. It amounts to about eight acres, of which about four and a half acres will be devoted to the building itself, the rest being occupied by an open space which, for the present, will probably be laid out as a garden. The substratum of solid concrete, which was laid between two and three years ago, covers nearly the whole area to a depth varying from 5 feet to 10 feet. This part of the work was executed by Messrs. Dove & Co.

“The buildings themselves have undergone several slight modifications on paper since the month of January 1872, when an elaborate drawing of the Southern and

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Western fronts was published in the *Illustrated London News*. They are of Gothic design, and, viewed by non-professional eyes, might be set down as somewhat irregular examples of the Decorated or Second Pointed style. But their architect has embodied in his designs so much of modern improvements, and has so thoroughly studied the adaptation of the architecture of the Edwardian period to the requirements of our age, that we fancy he would prefer to call the structure a specimen of the 'Victorian style.' The whole building forms, approximately at least, a somewhat irregular square, the Strand front being 483 feet in length, while the depth of the Strand to Carey Street is about 460 feet. The northern, southern, and western fronts will be of Portland stone, while the eastern front will present a combination of Portland stone interspersed with red bricks, as will be the case with the interior courts and quadrangles. The entire pile of buildings will be divided into two blocks—the eastern and lesser one, which will be erected, under the contract, in three years; and the larger block to the west, which it will take six or seven years to complete. Each front is to be relieved by dwarf towers, arches and other features; and there will be two high towers, one at the south-east angle and one at the eastern end of Carey Street. The former will be 170 feet in height, or nearly four times the height of Temple Bar.

"The whole edifice will be three, four, and five storeys in height in different parts; and its lofty pitched roofs will be relieved by the insertion of gables, dormers and pinnacles, in great variety. The general height of the building up to the ridge of the roof will be about 90 or 95 feet; and over the rest will rise the Central Hall, in the main or western block, to which the rest of the building will be subordinate. The Central Hall will be about 140 feet to the top of its roof, or 90 feet measured

Description of Law Courts

inside up to the crown of the stone vaulted ceiling. Underneath it will be a large lower chamber, which, if it were underground might be termed a crypt.

“The ground plan, as it stands at present, shows that the architect has given accommodation to no less than eighteen distinct courts, each with its own entrance and staircase, with separate approaches and doors for the judges, the jury the witnesses, the Bar, and the public, together with rooms for clerks, secretaries and registrars, and also waiting rooms.

“On the western side, towards Clement’s Inn, there will be a large open space. This will probably be used as gardens, and there will be a flight of broad stone steps, leading up into the western end of Carey Street. It will be possible, if required, to erect here a western block of buildings, corresponding with that on the eastern side.

“The cost of the building, if the estimates allowed by the Commissioners should not be exceeded, will be three-quarters of a million. The structure will absorb no less than 62,000 tons of Portland and 18,000 tons of other stone, and also about 35,000,000 of red and white bricks. It will be remembered, in conclusion, that, about two years ago, Mr. Street proposed the removal of St. Clement’s Church to a site on the vacant space on the west side of the new building—a proposal which met with the approval not only of Mr. Lowe, but also of the then Lord Chancellor. The Metropolitan Board of Works, however, declined to entertain the idea, although the Government offered to provide the site free of cost.

“Mr. Street, in a printed minute, dated May 1869, thus sums up the chief ‘æsthetical advantages’ of the Carey Street site: ‘The elevation above the river is considerable. The entrances to the Central Hall will be 22 feet higher than it would be on the Embankment.

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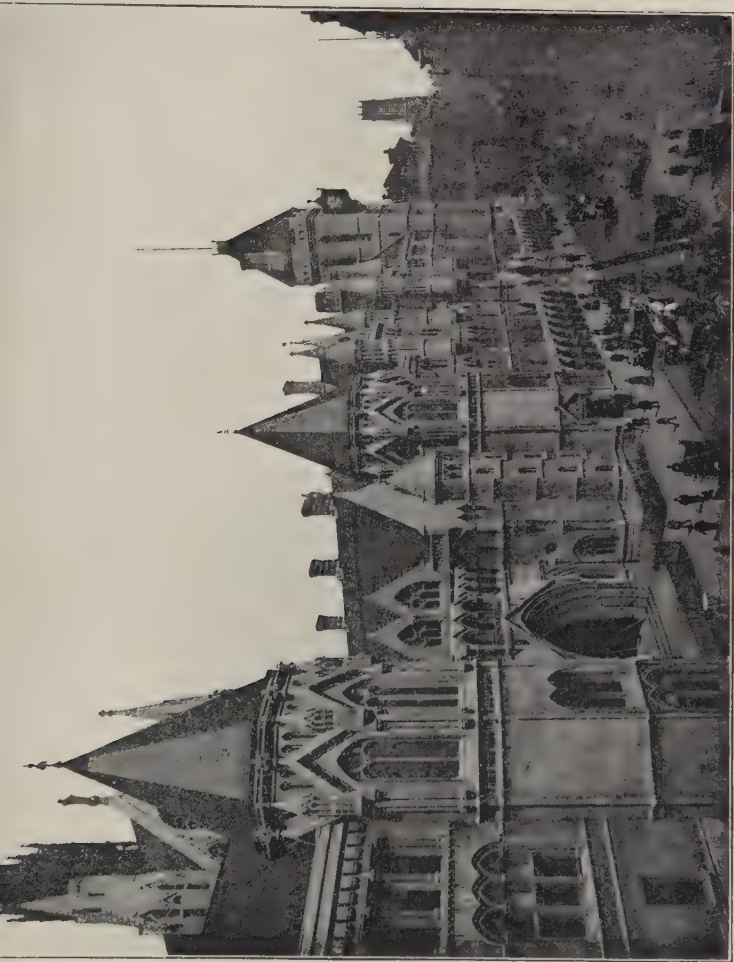
To this extent, therefore, it will in all distant views rise higher and be better seen than on the lower site. And I think that the position will be an important one, crowning the hill opposite St. Paul's, and supplying what the views of London at present much want—namely, some very marked architectural feature in the long expanse of building between St. Paul's and Westminster.'”

The estimate for their erection was £1,500,000, and the contract was signed 17th February 1874; the buildings were to have been finished in 1881, but strikes and other difficulties delayed the opening until the 4th of December 1882, when Queen Victoria opened them with great éclat. It was an imposing ceremony, for Her Majesty was received by all the Judges and the Bar. On the occasion the Lord Chancellor (Selborne) was raised to the dignity of an Earl, and the honour of knighthood was conferred upon the Treasurers of the different Inns of Court. But the Law Courts were not used for the public sittings of the various Courts until the following 12th of January, when the first cases were heard. In consequence of the Assizes, fourteen of the Judges were absent, so no official ceremony took place beyond a few words from the Lord Chief-Justice (Coleridge) to the Bar.

Fitzstephen, whose description of London is the earliest we have, wrote in Latin, but the following is a translation of what he says about the springs: “There are, also, round London, on the northern side, in the suburbs, excellent springs; the water of which is sweet, clear, and salubrious,

‘Mid glistening pebbles gliding playfully’;

among which, Holywell, Clerkenwell, and St. Clement's well (*fons Sacer, fons Clericorum, fons Sancti Clementis*



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THE LAW COURTS.

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St. Clement's Well

nominatiores habentur) are of most note, and most frequently visited, as well by the scholars from the schools, as by the youth of the city when they go out to take the air in the summer evenings."

From its proximity to the Church, no doubt this well borrowed some of its sanctity, until people came to believe in its curative properties—but it was doomed to annihilation by the irresistible march of events. The *Times* of 1st May 1874 thus chronicles its decease: "THE HOLY WELL OF ST. CLEMENT.—Another relic of old London has lately passed away; the holy well of St. Clement, on the north of St. Clement Danes Church, has been filled in and covered over with earth and rubble, in order to form part of the foundation of the Law Courts of the future. It is said that penitents and pilgrims used to visit this well as early as the reign of Ethelred, and it was known from time immemorial as *St. Clement's Well*. . . . Charles Knight, in his *London*, published in 1841, mentions the well 'as now covered over with a pump,' and he adds that 'the well still remains flowing as steadily and as freshly as ever.' It has often been supposed that this well supplied the old Roman bath in Strand Lane, but this is a mistake, the water which feeds that bath springing up out of the London clay below, on the spot, with perfect regularity."

The district cleared for the Law Courts was bounded on the north by Horseshoe Court, Yates' Court, and Carey Street; on the east by Bell Yard; on the south by Pickett Street and the Strand, and on the west by Clement's Inn, and there is not much to say about it; even the indefatigable Stow and Strype do not give much information. "*St. Clement's Lane* comes out of *Butcher's Row*, and fronts *Clement's Inn*. And near the Gate is the *Lamb Inn* of some Note and Trade. Then passing by *St. Clement's Inn* and *Boswell Court*, it

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runneth northwards into *Clare Market*, and in its passage takes in *St. Clement's Pump*, or Well, of Note for its excellent Spring Water. A little above this Pump is *Plough Alley*, which with three Turnings goes into a street by the *Plough* stables, which fronts the Play House by *Lincoln's Inn Grange*, in *Little Lincoln's Inn Fields*. More towards *Clare Market* is *Horshoe Court*, a pretty handsome Place, with a Freestone Pavement, having a Prospect into *St. Clement's Inn Gardens*. And opposite this Court is *Yates' Court*, not over good, nor large; and then nearer to *Clare Market*, on the Right Hand, is a very small Place, with a narrow Entrance, called *Pygmy Court*.

“Between *Temple Bar* and the turning into *Clement's Inn* on the North side of the *Butcher Row* (so called from the Butcher's Shambles on the South side) are several Courts, most of which are but small. The first is *Ship Yard*, a Throughfare into *Little Shear Lane*, with a pretty broad Passage; on the East side is an open Place going into a small Court, called *Chair Court*, with a fair Freestone pavement. This Yard seems to take its name from the *Ship Tavern*, at the Entrance thereof. Near to *Ship Yard* are these Courts, *Swan Court*, very small. *Star Court* indifferent good and large, with an open Air. *White Hart Court*, long, but narrow. *Lock Alley* but small. *Windmill Court*, very small and inconsiderable. *Crown Court* hath an open Air about the midst, and leadeth into little *Shear Lane*. *Bear and Harrow Court*, so called from such a Sign, a noted Eating House, at the Entrance into it. This Court (or rather Alley, for its Length and Narrowness) runs into *Boswell Court*. Then, beyond *St. Clement's Lane*, is the *Angel Inn*, a very large Place and of a great Resort, especially for the *Cornish* and *West Country Lawyers*.”

Old Boswell Court

Many of these courts and alleys must have been re-named like the Shire or Shear Lanes, which were transformed into the different Serle's Places, and there are only a few of them with any reminiscences. According to that very painstaking antiquary, John Timbs: "The abode of 'the quality' was in Old Boswell Court, adjoining Clement's Lane. This court was named from Mr. Boswell, from whose house, in 1659, Gilbert Talbot wrote a letter of London gossip to his father, the celebrated Earl of Shrewsbury. Mr. Cunningham found in the St. Clement Danes burial register: '1611, Sep. 2. Mr. Ewins, Esquier, from Boswell House: Lord Chief Justice and Mr. Edward Lyttleton, Solicitor General, lived here in 1695: Lady Raleigh (widow of Sir Walter) in 1622-5: and Lady Fanshawe, in Sir Richard's absence.' Lady Fanshawe, in her *Memoirs*, writes: 'In his absence I took a house in Boswell Court, near Temple Bar, for two years, immediately moving all my goods thereto.' The Fanshawes had a house in Lincoln's Inn fields, on the north side, where the Countess of Middlesex had lived before, and the same day that Lady F. came there, was brought the body of her dear husband, who died at Madrid. After this, Lady F. removed, with her five children, to the opposite side of the Fields.

"As you proceeded from Old Boswell Court northward, the houses were of considerable height; a flight of steps led you into New Boswell Court, described by Hatton, in 1708, as 'a pleasant one.' The house westward of the steps was very lofty, had a noble staircase with twisted rails, and one of the finest attics in the neighbourhood. The houses in the Court were almost exclusively let to barristers and solicitors. The north side led to Carey Street, which had long lost some of its olden interest; and though the old fig tree may still flourish in Cook's Court, the Grange Inn, and its

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galleried yard, whereat playgoers put up their horses, had given way to the site of King's College Hospital. Passing the entrance to Yates Court, we noted the old yard of the Plough Inn (the house had been rebuilt); and then, looking into New Boswell Court, we saw how its heavy old eaves had been removed, a parapet substituted, and the doorways modernised; and, upon the steps at the southern entrance was a relic of 'the light of other days'—a watchman's box of very old date, which was drawn up from the pavement during the day. Returning to Carey Street, we looked in at new Court, where the Independent's Chapel had been taken down: the former chapel of Burgess, Bradbury and Winter was burnt in the Sacheverel riots in 1710."

CHAPTER X

The "Black Horse" — Newcastle Court — Shire Lane — Theodore Hook — Bad Neighbourhood — The Barringtons — A Police Raid — Elias Ashmole — Steele and Shire Lane — The "Trumpet" — Kit-Cat Club — Society at the "Trumpet" — Serle's Place.

MR. DIPROSE, writing in 1868, says: "In Old Boswell Court stood an hostelry named the 'Black Horse,' which some thirty or forty years ago was one of the best frequented and most jovial of its kind in London, before the advent of Music Halls; in fact, it was 'the' concert room of that time. Considering the style of building, and class of entertainment of the period, in many respects it is doubtful if our gorgeous and expensive Music Halls are much of an improvement upon the Boswell Court Concert room, except in affording a greater scope, and giving greater facilities for intrigue, and the exuberances of masculine and feminine 'fast life.'

"Many of the public celebrities of thirty years ago were wont to gather round mine host of the 'Black Horse,' and assist, as the French say, at his nightly 'sing-song'; to hear Dowson, Harry Perry, J. Bruton, Toplis, Mrs. Paul, and the celebrated Miss James in her favourite character of the Dashing White Sergeant; and such was the attraction of this fascinating vocalist, that she drew to this Concert room, nightly, a number of the fast men of the day. Although it was a mixed company, no doubt it was an advance upon the 'Cock and Hen' sing-songs, there being a raised platform, stage, &c. Occasionally the room would be visited by some sparkling, rollicking sporting men about town, upon whose

Old Time Aldwych

entry additional devilry and life would be thrown into the scene. The singers might then be seen seated next a marquis, or a lord, who were never backward about the 'one bottle more'; in fact, potent liquors flowed freely amongst the whole company, gaiety and revelry was the order of the night, for the greater the glee and the heartier the spree when some of the jolly roisterers were made drunk early. The visits of the noble 'bloods' were but the foretaste of future frolics, and but a slight sip at pleasure's fountain; for were there not, in this neighbourhood, deep and dangerous wells, overflowing with enticing charms, ever attended by beauteous, but fallen nymphs, whose voluptuous attractions gathered around them the noble and wealthy, the poet and the painter, the swell and the rogue; and all fast London life assembled here to 'make a night of it.' We are writing of the days when the Elysium, Mother H.'s, 'The Finish,' Jessop's, etc., were in their zenith and glory. We are happy, however, to say they have disappeared. Some yet living may remember the good humoured, though battered beef-steak looking face of 'Deaf Burke,' who frequented the room, and his 'Mind yer, Mister, no flies,' when calling for a pot of porter. To this celebrated pugilist is attributed the old story of the 'flies in gin and water,' and hence the term 'no flies' became prevalent. Burke, in his youth, was a humourist; he was enjoying a bottle one evening, with a friend, and, as a finish, ordered some gin and water. 'Hot and strong,' shouted he of the undeveloped tympanum—'hot and strong, and a dash of lemon.' The goblet was brought, steaming with a most inviting odour; young Burke raised the mortal nectar to his lips, and beheld some dissipated flies lying at the bottom of the tumbler; he placed the glass on the table, and deliberately removed the flies with the spoon, five or six in number,

The "Black Horse"

and laid them side by side before him, and then giving a hearty pull at the gin and water, he as deliberately replaced the flies within the rummer, and passed it to his friend. His companion stared angrily: 'Do you dare to insult me, and in the presence of Company?' said the irate *vis-à-vis*. 'Pardon me,' replied Burke, quietly handing the glass a second time,—'tho' I don't drink flies myself, I didn't know but what others might.' Hence 'no flies' stuck to the old man to the end of his life. . . . Before taking leave of the 'Black Horse,' we have a word to say of a certain apartment in the basement of this house; or, as it was styled in the flash cant, the 'Patter fee Lumber'—lumber being a cant phrase for room. Herein used to meet some of the most notorious thieves, pickpockets, and cracksmen; in brief, all the 'cross coves' of the district. Here they held a kind of Club, established for the purpose of furnishing means to fee counsel to assist those who required 'legal assistance.' . . . Painful is the remembrance of the too long tolerated existence of such a den of infamy as Newcastle Court was a few years ago. It was one of the lowest haunts of this parish, and consisted entirely of houses of ill-fame of the worst description, stored with the foulest moral pollution. There might be seen, in the broad glare of day, sitting at the parlour windows of every house, abandoned women, young and old, decked in tawdry finery, bloated with gin and debauchery, lavishing enticing smiles, and bandying obscene expressions to entrap the unwary passer by. The scenes enacted at night were of the most horrible description; and, at last, its abominable notoriety become so glaring, the parish authorities were compelled to indict the occupiers, which they did, and the vicious inhabitants were turned out; but only for some of them to resume their shocking mode of living in Wyck Street. One of the frail sister-

Old Time Aldwych

hood, whose magnitude of height and rotundity may be better conceived than described when we state that her weight was above twenty stone, bore the cognomen of 'The City Barge.' This Court then became the residence of hawkers, niggers, tramps, etc. In the Minutes of Evidence it is stated that there were in this court two houses, in which sixty persons slept. Fourpenny lodging houses entertained thieves and vagabonds of the lowest class, and it need scarcely be remarked that this was the filthiest place in the parish, and contained more of the elements of disgrace to common humanity than any other place in London."

Hemlock Court, another of the places pulled down to form the site for the Law Courts, was another lively place, where, according to the Minutes of Evidence, at one house "there are thirty persons who sleep there nightly; that is, they go there from night to night, and any person who could produce fourpence had a bed to himself."

In the list of streets demolished occur Serle's Place, Serle's Place Lower, Serle's Place Middle, which are shown on the old maps as Shire Lane and Little Shire Lane. They were of most unsavoury repute; and we learn something about Shire Lane in No. 143 *Quarterly Review* (p. 86) anent Theodore Hook: "On his arrest under the Exchequer Writ (August 1823) he was taken to the dwelling and spunging house of the sheriff's officer, his captor, by name Mr. *Hemp*; and, still hoping that a protracted imprisonment was not seriously intended, he chose to remain there week after week, and month after month, until Easter. The expense of board and lodging at a house of that class is always heavy; his accommodations were mean, and the situation about the worst in London. Shire Lane, so named as separating part of the City from Middlesex, a vile,

Shire Lane

squalid place, noisy and noxious, apparently almost inaccessible either to air or light, swarming with a population of thief catchers, gin sellers, and worse. . . . In April 1824, then, Hook at last took his leave of Shire Lane. . . . The close confinement in the bad air of Shire Lane had affected his health, . . . he came out pale and flabby in the face, and with a figure fast tending to corpulence."

Mr. Diprose says that Lower Serle's Place, or Shire Lane, was only very bad in "the lower portion of it, and Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Lower Serle's Place were houses of ill fame; and it is said, many years ago there existed a communication with the house No. 242 Strand, through which the thieves used to escape after ill-using their victims. Nos. 13 and 14 were bad houses; Nos. 9, 10, and 11, where thieves used to meet, was known as Cadger's Hall; and lately, in one of the rooms of the middle house, were found several bushels of bread placed there by the 'distressed' beggars, not for a rainy day, but because they were, through the liberality of an indiscriminating, generous public, provided with better fare. No. 19 was a double house, called 'The Retreat,' where the thieves ran through and down Crown Court, escaped into the Strand. One of the dark deeds of Shire Lane is, that in the days of the old parish watch a person was thrown downstairs, the body was carried away and placed against a neighbour's door, where it was found by the watch; no clue to the murderer could be obtained at the time, but, many years having elapsed, two desperate characters confined in the Queen's Bench were overheard during a quarrel to criminate each other respecting the murder. In this lane, at the 'Angel and Crown' tavern, a Mr. Quarrington was murdered and robbed by Thomas Carr and Elizabeth Adams, who were hanged at Tyburn, January 18, 1738. No. 13 in

Old Time Aldwych

this lane was a large building used as printing offices, a portion of which was formerly the 'Bible' public-house, which about twenty years since was a house of call for printers, and where Jack Sheppard used to resort. There was a trap in the middle of a room, where it is said that Jack used to escape through a subterranean passage, and make good his retreat into Bell Yard when being pursued.

"The poet, Sir John Denham, when a student in Lincoln's Inn in 1635, after a drunken frolic at the 'Griffin,' in this lane, went with a pot of ink and plasterer's brush, and blotted out all signs between Temple Bar and Charing Cross, which cost Denham and his companions some money. An advertisement which appeared in the original edition of the *Spectator*, No. 33, mentions the 'Griffin,' in Sheer Lane, Temple Bar, and begins thus—'Lost, yesterday, by a lady in a velvet furbelow scarf, a watch,' etc.

"A tavern, named the 'Antigallican,' stood in this lane at the beginning of the 19th Century: it was kept by Harry Lee, of sporting notoriety, and father of Alexander Lee, the first and 'original tiger,' brought out by the noted Lord Barrymore. This public-house was much patronised by his lordship, and others fond of low life, pugilism, and brutal sports. The flash cognomens of the brothers Barrymore will afford a tolerably good idea of their amiable qualities: the eldest was called 'Hellgate,' the second 'Cripplegate' (he was lame), and the third 'Newgate,' so styled because, although an Honourable and a Reverend, he had been in almost every gaol in England except Newgate. This interesting family circle was completed by a sister called 'Billingsgate,' on account of the flowery and forcible language she made use of. The purification of this lane was a long and

Ashmole's House

tedious process; for, in the Minutes of Evidence, March 14, 1865, one of the persons examined stated that only three weeks since, a man in Shire Lane was prosecuted for robbery.

“A retired sergeant of the F. Division of Police, during the Chartist agitation, was a member of a political society held in Shire Lane, and he tells us that on one occasion he attended a meeting, when a brother member announced to the chairman that they had a spy in the room, and made a proposition to throw him out of the window; but, fortunately for our friend, another member, displaying more humanity, made an amendment to the effect that the room door be opened, and if the spy, whoever he might be, did not immediately depart, the original proposition should be enforced. The sergeant lost no time in making for the door, but had forgotten, in the excitement of the moment, the arrangement made for the police at that particular time, to occupy the lower part of the house and stairs for the purpose of arresting the members of the society; and his brother officers, not recognising him in the disguise of a shoemaker, together with his eagerness to escape before he could make any explanation, knocked him down with their truncheons.”

Elias Ashmole, “the greatest virtuoso and curioso that ever was known or read of in England before his time,” lived for some time in Little Shire Lane, as Antony à Wood tells us under date of 1st May 1670. “Dined with Mr. Ashmole at his house in Sheer Lane, near Temple Bar, and John Davis of Kichnelly, was there. After dinner he conducted A. W. to his lodgings in the Middle Temple, where he showed us all his rarities, namely, ancient coins, medals, pictures, etc., which took them up near two hours time.” This collection had been much impaired by a fire which occurred

Old Time Aldwych

in 1659, and which wrought sad havoc with his printed books and medals. Tradescant left him his museum,



ASHMOLE'S HOUSE, LITTLE SHIRE LANE.

and in 1677 he determined to present the joint collections to the University of Oxford. A suitable building was

Steele and Shire Lane

provided for them, and they filled twelve waggons. He notes in his diary, 17th February 1683: "The last load of my rarities was sent to the barge, and this afternoon I relapsed into the gout." He also bequeathed his library to the same university; died 18th May 1692.

Steele, under the *nom-de-plume* of Isaac Bickerstaff, makes frequent mention of Shire Lane (in which place it was supposed he lived) in the *Tatler*; for instance, in No. 86, 27th October 1709, he was entertaining some friends at his lodgings, when one proposed that they "should adjourn to some public-house, where everybody might call for what they pleased, and enter upon the business." They made a start, but a question of precedence arose, and "we were fixed in this perplexity for some time, till we heard a very loud noise in the street; and Sir Harry asking what it was, I, to make them move, said, 'it was fire.' Upon this, all ran down as fast as they could, without order or ceremony, till we got into the street, where we drew up in very good order, and filed off down Sheer Lane. . . . In this order we marched down Sheer Lane, at the upper end of which I lodge. When we came to Temple Bar, Sir Harry and Sir Giles got over;¹ but a run of coaches kept the rest of us on this side the street. However, we all at last landed, and drew up in very good order before Ben Tooke's shop,² who favoured our rallying with great humanity; from whence we proceeded again, till we came to Dick's Coffee House,³ where I designed to carry them."

No. 109, 20th December 1709—"There has not for some Years been such a Tumult in our Neighbourhood, as this Evening about Six. At the lower End of the Lane the Word was given, that there was a great Funeral

¹ Across the road.

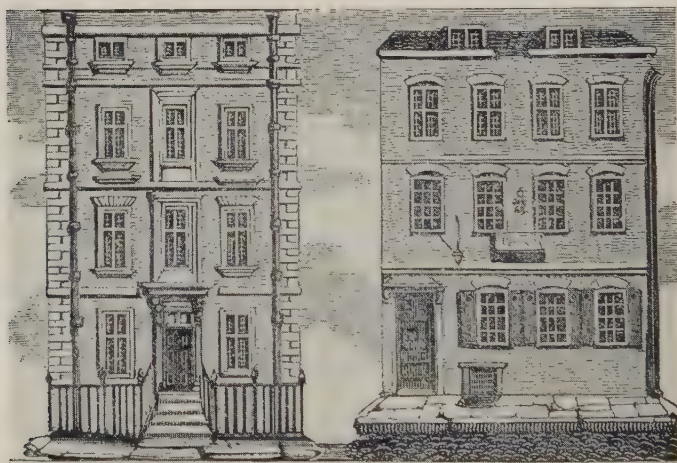
² A noted bookseller in Fleet Street.

³ Demolished about 1875.

Old Time Aldwych

coming by. The next Moment came forward, in a very hasty, instead of a solemn Manner, a long Train of Lights, when at last a Footman, with all his Force, ran through the whole Art of beating the Door of the House next to me, and ended his Rattle with the true finishing Rap. This did not only bring one to the Door at which he knocked, but to that of every one in the Lane in an Instant."

No. 111, 24th December 1709—"The Watchman,



SQUIRE'S COFFEE-HOUSE.

Spectator.

THE "TRUMPET."

Tatler.

who does me particular Honours, as being the chief Man in the Lane, gave so very great a Thump at my Door last Night, that I awaken'd at the Knock, and heard myself complimented with the usual Salutation of *Good Morrow, Mr. Bickerstaff; Good Morrow, my Masters all.*"

In this lane stood a very old public-house, called the "Trumpet," where it is believed that the famous *Kit Cat Club* was founded. This club was instituted

The "Trumpet"

in 1703 by above thirty noblemen and gentlemen, to promote the Protestant succession. The Duke of Marlborough, Sir Robert Walpole, Addison, Steele, and Dr. Garth were members. The club afterwards moved to the "Fountain" in the Strand.

Steele, in the *Tatler* (No. 132, 11th February 1710), gives an account of an amusing but fictitious club held at the "Trumpet." He says: "After this, my reader will not be surprised to hear the account, which I am about to give of a club of my own contemporaries, among whom I pass two or three hours every evening. This I look upon as taking my first nap before I go to bed. The truth of it is, I should think myself unjust to posterity, as well to the society at the *Trumpet*, of which I am a member, did I not, in some part of my writings, give an account of the persons among whom I have passed almost a sixth part of my time for these last forty years. Our club consisted originally of fifteen; but, partly by the severity of the law in arbitrary times, and partly by the natural effects of old age, we are, at present, reduced to a third part of that number; in which, however, we have this consolation, that the best company is said to consist of five persons. I must confess, besides the aforementioned benefit which I meet with in the conversation of this select society, I am not the less pleased with the company, in that I find myself the greatest wit among them, and am heard as their oracle in all points of learning and difficulty.

"Sir Jeoffery Notch, who is the oldest of the club, has been in possession of the right hand chair time out of mind, and is the only man among us that has the liberty of stirring the fire. This our foreman is a gentleman of an ancient family, that came to a great estate before he had discretion, and ran it out in hounds, horses and cock-fighting; for which reason he looks upon himself as an

Old Time Aldwych

honest, worthy gentleman, who has had misfortunes in the world, and calls every thriving man a pitiful upstart.

"Major Matchlock is the next senior, who served in the last civil wars, and has all the battles by heart. He does not think any action in Europe worth talking of, since the fight of Marston-Moor; and, every night, tells us of his having been knocked off his horse at the rising of the London apprentices; for which he is in great esteem among us.

"Honest old Dick Reptile is the third of our society. He is a good natured indolent man, who speaks little himself, but laughs at our jokes; and brings his young nephew along with him, a youth of eighteen years old, to show him good company, and give him a taste of the world. This young fellow generally sits silent; but, whenever he opens his mouth, or laughs at any thing that passes, he is constantly told by his uncle, after a jocular manner, 'Ay, ay, Jack, you young men think us fools; but we old men know you are.'

"The greatest wit of our company, next to myself, is a Bencher of the neighbouring Inn, who, in his youth, frequented the ordinaries about Charing Cross, and pretends to have been intimate with Jack Ogle.¹ He has about ten distychs of Hudibras without book, and never leaves the club till he has applied them all. If any modern wit be mentioned, or any town frolic spoken of, he shakes his head at the dulness of the present age, and tells us a story of Jack Ogle.

"For my own part, I am esteemed among them, because they see I am something respected by others; though, at the same time, I understand, by their behaviour, that I am considered by them as a man of a

¹ A gamester and buffoon, commonly known as "Jack Ogle" or "Mad Ogle," was at one time in the Horseguards, and has been celebrated in a chap-book.

The Club

great deal of learning, but no knowledge of the world ; insomuch, that the Major sometimes, in the height of his military pride, calls me the Philosopher ; and Sir Jeoffery, no longer ago than last night, upon a dispute what day of the month it was then in Holland, pulled his pipe out of his mouth, and cried, ‘ What does the scholar say to it ? ’

“ Our club meets precisely at *six o'clock in the evening* ; but I did not come last night till half an hour after seven, by which means I escaped the battle of Naseby which the Major usually begins about three-quarters after six ; I found, also, that my good friend the Bencher had already spent three of his distichs ; and only waiting an opportunity to hear a sermon spoken of, that he might introduce the Couplet where ‘ a stick ’ rhymes to ‘ ecclesiastic.’ At my entrance into the room, they were naming a red petticoat and a cloak, by which I found that the Bencher had been diverting them with a story of Jack Ogle.

“ I had no sooner taken my seat, but Sir Geoffery, to show his good will towards me, gave me a pipe of his own tobacco, and stirred up the fire. I look upon it as a point of morality, to be obliged by those who endeavour to oblige me ; and therefore, in requital for his kindness, and to set the conversation agoing, I took the best occasion I could to put him upon telling us the story of Old Gantlett, which he always does with very particular concern. He traced up his descent on both sides for several generations, describing his diet and manners of life, with his several battles, and particularly that in which he fell. This Gantlett was a game cock, upon whose head the knight, in his youth, had won five hundred pounds and lost two thousand. This, naturally, set the Major upon the account of Edge-hill fight, and ended in a duel of Jack Ogle’s.

Old Time Aldwych

“Old Reptile was extremely attentive to all that was said, though it was the same he had heard every night



DOORWAYS IN SERLE'S PLACE.

for these twenty years, and upon all occasions winked upon his nephew to mind what passed.

“This may suffice to give the world a taste of our

The "Trumpet"

innocent conversation, which we spun out till about ten of the clock, when my maid came with a lantern to light me home."

The "Trumpet" must have been a place of good entertainment, for, in an advertisement in the *Daily Advertiser* of 2nd July 1742, we read how Mr. Jones, the harpist (whose employment, judging from other advertisements, changed according to the fickleness and fashion of his and the tavern's patrons), announces his removal from the Widow Evan's to Mr. Thomas Each's, at the "Trumpet" in Sheer Lane, near Temple Bar; where, every evening, he would be ready, at five, to entertain gentlemen on the harp or violin, as he usually did, when in Hercules Pillar Alley, Fleet Street. On Monday he would open with a new piece of music for the harp of his own composition. "At which place there is a very commodious room—best liquors of all sorts, and suitable attendance."

The name of the house was altered many years ago to the "Duke of York," but Mr. Diprosé says: "Its last host took great interest in the reputation of his house; he restored the sign board (a modelled trumpet) to the house in its original place, and obtained the assent of the magistrates to the change. When the third coating of colour was removed, in 1845, from the front of this house, the correct name was found to be 'Serle's Place,' and not 'Lower Serle's Place,' which commenced with the adjoining house."

That Serle's Place must have been well inhabited at one time we have but to look at the illustration of two doorways in the place, taken in 1858, to be convinced,—the carving is very beautiful.

CHAPTER XI

Ship Yard—Its bad Character—Agas' Map—Map of 1654—Map
after the Great Fire—Paintings at Cowdray—Strand Cross—
Charity Children in the Strand—Riot at Peter Wood's House.

I HAVE yet to mention Ship Yard, which ran from the Strand into Little Shire Lane, and was so called from the "Ship" Inn, mentioned in a grant to Sir Christopher Hatton in 1571. There is a token of this tavern dated 1649, and it was standing in 1756. John Reynolds, a cook, issued a token (a fox stealing a goose) in Ship Yard in 1666. Of this place Mr. Diprose says: "In Ship Yard the houses were built very high and close together, the upper part projecting over the lower, admitting very little air or light; some of them were of great age and highly detrimental to health: it was a very crowded part of the parish—few places in London having so many houses crowded into the same space—and was made up of narrow courts and alleys, without any roadway. The locality was, at one time, a colony of thieves; a very old inhabitant assures us that he remembers, that when capital punishment was inflicted for robbery, an execution seldom took place without some one from this spot being amongst the number. Many cases of robbery and offences against the law, which have taken place in this neighbourhood, years back, might be related. Recently, however, although in this vicinity resided not only 'unfortunates,' but members of the swell mob and light-fingered gentry, respectable inhabitants and passers-by were seldom molested. It

Ship Yard

appears to be pretty generally the characteristic of thieves to commit their depredations anywhere but near home.

“At the back of the yard stood, formerly, a block of houses, from four to five storeys in height, which were let out to vagrants, thieves, sharpers, smashers, and other abandoned characters. Throughout the vaults of this rookery there existed a continuous communication, or passage, so that easy access could be obtained from one to the other, facilitating escape, or concealment in the event of pursuit, which, from the nature of the nefarious traffic in practice, very often occurred. The end house of this block of buildings was selected for the manufactory of counterfeit coin, and passed by the name of the ‘Smashing Lumber.’ The ingenuity employed in the construction of the apartments may be mentioned. In the first place, every room had its secret trap or panel, that a free entrance or exit might be quickly effected from one place to the other; and, from the upper storey, which was the workshop or factory, there was a shaft or well constructed, in direct communication with the cellar before noticed. The whole of the coining apparatus and the *employés* could be conveyed away as if by a touch of magic, by being lowered in a basket by means of a pulley. This secret mint had a prosperous run for many years, the master of which, amassing a large sum, wisely disappeared; for, not long after the formation of the new police and the appointment of detectives, this den was discovered and abolished.”

Before we go any further, I would call attention to the growth of this part of London, and show of what recent date it is. This first map is attributed to Ralph Agas, a native of Stoke-by-Nayland, in Suffolk, a surveyor by profession, and it is believed to have been made in 1560. It is not the earliest map of London, for

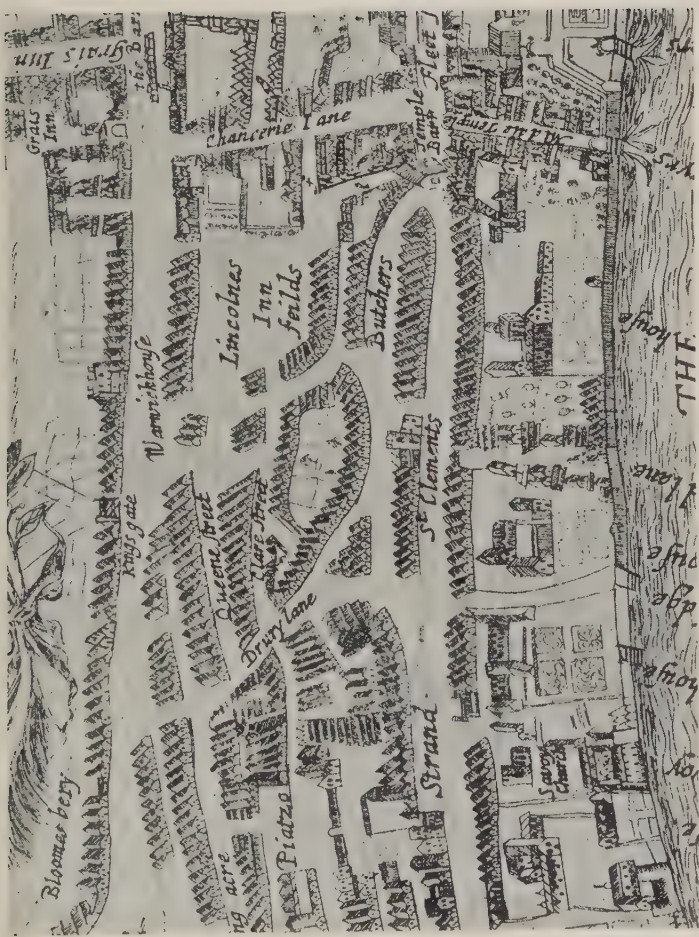
Old Time Aldwych

there is one, executed in 1543, by Anthony Van den Wyngrede, the original of which is still preserved in the Bodleian Library, but it is the best. It shows a few



RALPH AGAS' MAP—*circa*. 1560.

houses by Temple Bar, but there are no signs of Butcher's Row. St. Clement's Church is well shown, having a large tree behind it, on the Temple Bar side:



MAP—1654.

PUBLIC
WANDSWORTH
LIBRARY

Maps

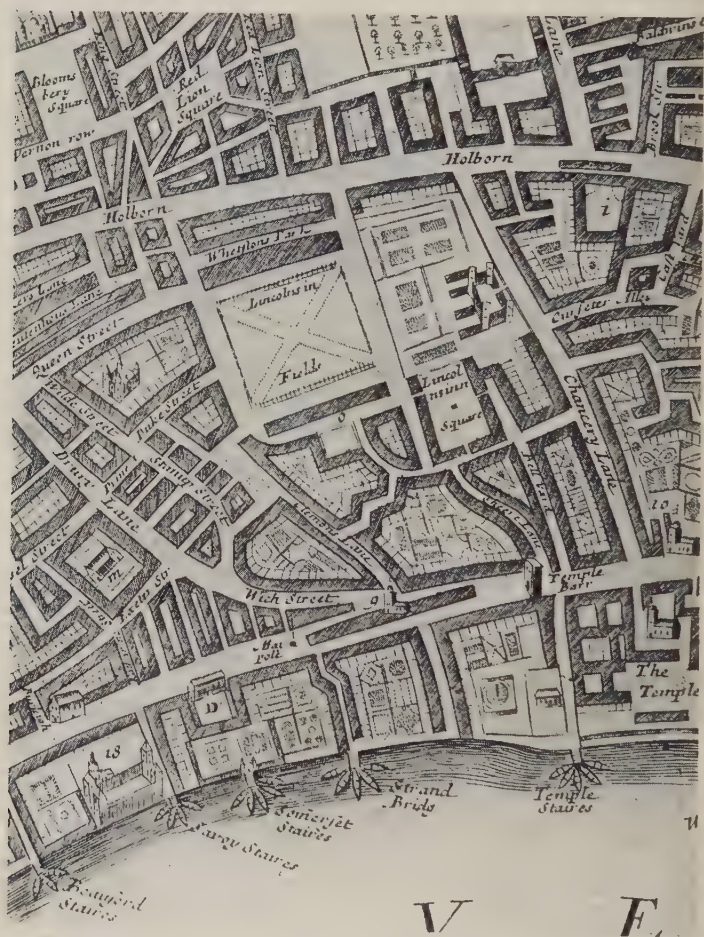
then there are houses to Strand Bridge, which was a little to the east of the present St. Mary's Church. Here is shown either the old Cross, or a stone building over a spring. There are houses in Wych Street, and Drury House is shown: Via de Aldwych has ceased to be the name of Drury Lane—the ground around being all fields with footpaths leading to Holborn, the north side of which is all fields. There is a gate which corresponds to King's Gate, and a footpath to what is now Theobald's Road.

There are several maps of London between that of Agas and this, which is "The Newest and exactest Mapp of the most famous Citties London and Westminster, with their suburbs, and the manner of their streets, 1654." Here is a decided advance, and we see the space gradually filling up. This shows Butcher's Row, between Temple Bar and St. Clement's Church. Lincoln's Inn Fields are unenclosed; Clare Street and Queen Street are shown, as also are King's Gate and Warwick House.

This is "A New Mapp of the City of London, much enlarged since the Great Fire in 1666, in which are several Streets, Places, and Buildings of Note, which hath been added since any other Mapps of London hath been published": engraved by Hollar, and sold about 1706. This shows the whole district built over. We see the Maypole in the Strand, Clement's Lane, Duke Street (now Sardinia Street), Queen Street, Wild Street, Princes Street, Stanup (Stanhope) Street, Wych Street, Drury Lane, Catherine Street, and Exeter Street. . . . [M] shews us that the King's Theatre was between Exeter Street, Russell Street, Catherine Street, and Drury Lane, nearly on the site of the present Drury Lane Theatre; and we see at [0] the New Play House at Portugal Row. Whetstone Park is there; Southampton

Old Time Aldwych

Street was then King Street, whence King's Way, or Thumbal Row, led to Liquor Pond Street, in Gray's Inn Lane. A comparison of these maps is very interesting,



HOLLAR'S MAP—*circa*. 1700.

as they show not only the gradual development of that part of London, but authoritatively fix the date of the expansion.

The Cowdray Pictures

The earliest pictorial representation of the Strand is shown in the frontispiece of this book, and represents the procession of Edward the Sixth to his coronation at Westminster, 19th February 1547, from a painting in the great drawing-room at Cowdray, near Midhurst in Sussex, which was unfortunately totally destroyed by fire in 1793. These paintings were formerly thought to be by Holbein, but afterwards were, probably more correctly, attributed to Theodore Bernardi, who painted the south transept of Chichester Cathedral, and resided close by. A paper read before the Society of Antiquaries, 25th March and 1st April 1773, by Sir Joseph Ayloffe, Bart. (*Archæologia*, iii. 239), treats of these pictures :

“ These paintings, which are in oil on stucco, occupy the whole length of each side of the room, and are continued along the upper end, as far as the angles of the jambs which guard the recess formed by the great bay window. In height they reach from the impost moulding of the dado to the under side of the cornice, and are in fine preservation. Those on the left side of the room are divided into three compartments, separated from each other by the figure of a banner staff, whose but-end is represented as resting on the ground, whilst its top, as low down as the coronal, is hid by the fascia of the cornice of the room. The first contains the march of Henry the Eighth from Calais towards Boulogne; the second represents the encampment of the English forces at Marquisse, or, as it was then called, Marquison; and the third exhibits the siege of Boulogne, an event which not only enlarged our territorial possessions in France, but redounded to the honour of King Henry, added glory to the English arms, and signalises the year 1544 in our national annals.

“ The paintings on the right hand side of the room

Old Time Aldwych

are divided into two compartments, the one containing the rendezvous of the English army at Portsmouth, in the year 1545, to oppose the intended invasion of this kingdom by the French, whose formidable fleet of men-of-war and transports are represented as lying off St. Helen's; and the other, containing the Procession of King Edward the Sixth from the Tower of London to Westminster, on the day preceding that of his coronation."

Another paper was read before the Society on 19th April 1787 (*Archæologia*, viii. 406): "An historical and descriptive Account of the Ancient painting preserved at Cowdray in Sussex, the Seat of Lord Viscount Montague; representing the Procession of King Edward VI. from the Tower of London to Westminster, February 19th, A.D. 1547, previous to his Coronation. By John Topham, Esqre."

He says: "The space beyond Temple Bar is truly represented to be almost destitute of buildings. An act was made in the 24th year of Henry VIII. cap. 11, directing that the street-way between Charing Cross and Strand Cross (near where Somerset Place is now situated), in the suburbs of London, should be sufficiently paved and maintained at the charge of the owners of the adjoining lands; and the Statute of 34 and 35 Henry VIII. cap 12, recites, that 'the way leading without Temple Bar westward, unto Clement's Inn Gates, New Inn Gates, and Drury Place, the bridge called Strand Bridge, and the way leading from the said Bridge towards Temple Bar; the lane called Foskue Lane, from the garden and tenement of the Bishop of Lichfield; and the garden and tenement called the Bell and Proctors, down to Strand Bridge, were very foul and full of pits and sloughs, very perilous and noysome, and necessary to be kept clean, for the avoiding of

The Early Strand

corrupt savours and occasions of pestilence; and directs the same to be paved and maintained at the expense of those who had lands, or tenements adjoining thereto.' These authorities show that the Strand was not then a continued street, but had only some buildings sparingly erected upon it.

"Howell, in his *Londinopolis*, tells us 'that London and Westminster were once above a mile asunder, but by insensible coalition and increase of people, they came at last to be united. The Union with Scotland, in 1603, he adds, did not a little conduce to make this union of London and Westminster; for the Scots, multiplying here mightily, nestled themselves about the Court, so that the Strand, from mud walls and thatched houses, came to the perfection of buildings it was in his time.'"

Having authenticated the picture, I must do the same for the scene, and here we must discard all idea of perspective. We see the crowded houses of London, Temple Bar, the Strand Cross by Somerset House, with its conduit close by, and the background, I take it, is formed by the Abbey and Palace of Westminster.

We know there was a building at Temple Bar before that built in the time of James I.; for Stow tells us that when Anne Boleyn went from the City to Westminster, that Temple Bar was "newly paynted and repaired," and on the occasion of Edward VI. passing through it, as here represented, the Bar was "painted and fashioned with battlements and buttresses of various colours, richly hung with cloth of arras, and garnished with fourteen standards of flags; there were also eight French Trumpeters blowing their trumpets after the fashion of their country, and a pair of regals with children singing to the same." But the artist has not depicted the scene; prob-

Old Time Aldwych

ably he never saw it, but "evolved it out of his inner consciousness."

He is decidedly hazy as to the whereabouts of the Strand Cross, but Stow tells us that "in the High Street, near unto the *Strand*, sometime stood a Cross of Stone against the Bishop of *Coventry* or *Chester* his House, whereof I read, that in the year 1294 and divers other times, the Justices Itinerants sate without *London*, at the Stone Cross over against the Bishop of *Coventry's* House, and sometime they sate in the Bishop's House, which was hard by the Strand." The proximity of the Gallows seems to accentuate this.

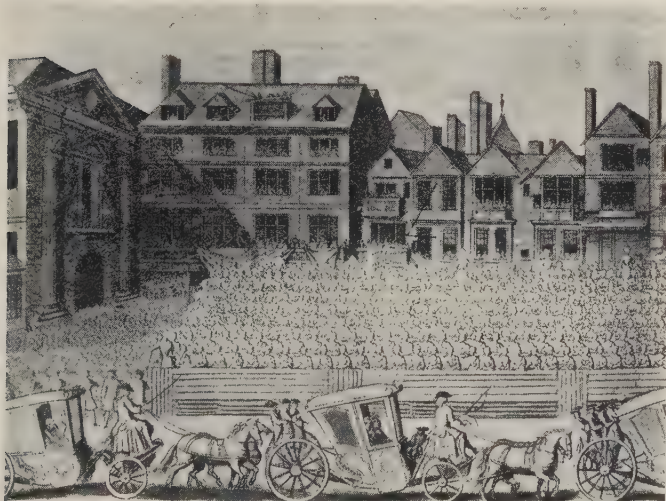
The little building near the Cross is thus explained by Strype. "At or near which Cross in the Strand stood, till of late, a *Maypole*, commonly called the *Maypole* in the *Strand*. Near to which is erected a Stone building over a Spring, designed at first to supply the Neighbourhood with Water, but now of little use."

We get a view of the Strand in the accompanying view of the Charity Children in the Strand, who were seated on a stand which extended from St. Clements Church to the Maypole, and exhibits the south side of the street. It was on the occasion of the public thanksgiving at St. Paul's Cathedral on 7th July 1713, for the Peace of Utrecht. Queen Anne was to have gone, but she was too ill, and the two Houses of Parliament went, the Peers in their robes. The principal conditions of the Peace between Great Britain and France were—the securing the Protestant succession, the separating of the French and Spanish crowns, the demolition of Dunkirk, the restoring and enlarging the British colonies and plantations in America, and the giving a just and reasonable satisfaction to all the Allies. This illustration is

The Charity Children

only a small portion of a very long copper-plate engraving by Vertue.

At its foot it says: "The view of the CHARITY CHILDREN in the STRAND, upon the VII of July MDCCXIII. being the day appointed by her late Majesty, Queen ANNE, for a Publick Thanksgiving for the Peace, when both Houses of Parliament made a Solemn Procession to the Cathedral of St. PAUL. By the care and provision of the Trustees of the several



CHARITY CHILDREN IN THE STRAND—7TH JULY 1713.

Charity Schools, in and about LONDON and WESTMINSTER, near IV thousand CHARITY CHILDREN, Boys and Girls, being new cloathed, were placed upon a Machine, extended in length 620 feet, which had in breadth eight ranges of seats, one above another: During the whole procession, which lasted near three Hours, they sung and repeated the Hymns, which were prepared upon the expectation of her Majesty's Royal Presence.

Old Time Aldwych

"THE FIRST HYMN SUNG BY THE CHARITY CHILDREN.

"LORD, give the QUEEN Thy Saving Health,
Whose HOPE on THEE depends :
Grant HER Increase of Fame and Wealth,
With BLISS that never ends.
Alleluiah ! Alleluiah ! Alleluiah ! Alleluiah ! Alleluiah !
Alleluiah ! Alleluiah ! Alleluiah ! Alleluiah !

For HER our fervent Vows aspire,
Our Praises are address'd :
Thou hast fulfill'd Her Heart's Desire,
And granted Her Request.
Alleluiah ! (9 times.)

A NURSING MOTHER to Thy FOLD,
Long, long may she remain :
And then with Joy Thy Face behold,
And with Thee ever reign.
Alleluiah ! (9 times.)

THE SECOND HYMN.

GLORY to GOD who Reigns on High,
Whom Saints and Angels praise :
Who from His Throne above the Sky,
The Sons of Men surveys.
Alleluiah ! (9 times.)

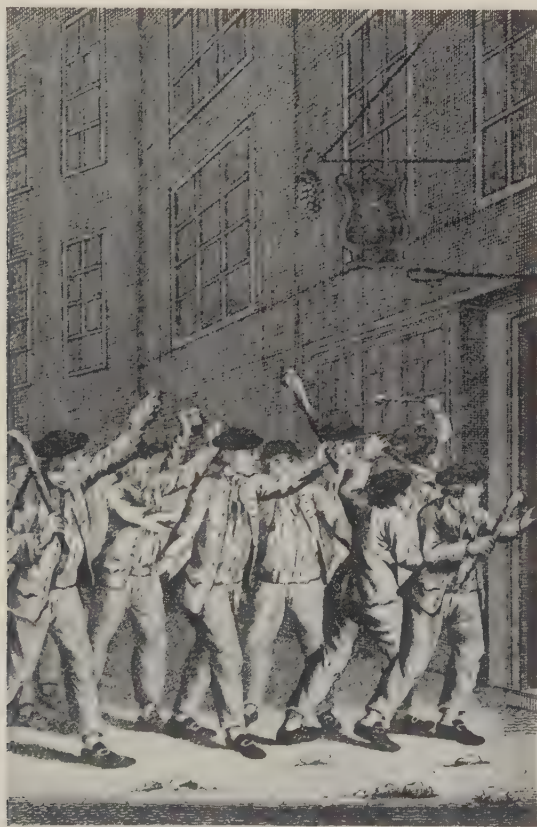
PEACE, His best Gift to Earth's return'd,
Long may it here remain :
As we too long its Absence mourn'd,
Nor sigh'd to Heav'n in vain.
Alleluiah ! (9 times.)

Good-will, Fair Friendship (Heavenly Guest !),
And Joy and Holy Love :
Make all MANKIND compleatly Bless'd,
Resembling Those above.
Alleluiah (9 times.)"

But the Strand was not always as innocent and idyllic as this ; it was a very curious and mixed neighbourhood on the north side, however decorous and proper the south side may have been. There were some

Riot at Peter Wood's

very queer houses, and Peter Wood, who kept one of them, the Star Tavern, got into sad trouble. It was on the 1st May 1749 that three sailors, belonging to the *Grafton* man-of-war, went into Peter Wood's house



ATTACK ON PETER WOOD'S HOUSE—1749.

"near the New Church in the Strand," where they were robbed of thirty guineas, four moidores, a bank-note of twenty pounds, two watches, etc. ; and, obtaining no satisfaction for their remonstrances, went out, vowing vengeance ; and anon returned with a great number of

Old Time Aldwych

armed sailors, who entirely demolished the furniture, cut the feather beds in pieces, strewed the feathers in the road, tore the wearing apparel of the women to shreds, and turned them out naked in the streets; then broke all the windows, and considerably damaged an adjacent house. At length a guard of soldiers was sent from the Tilt Yard at Whitehall, but when they arrived the mischief had been done. However, nine people concerned in the riot were apprehended and committed to Newgate.

There are three other pictures of this riot; but they can hardly be reproduced, as they are too realistic.

A guard of officers and sixty soldiers were ordered to do duty at Temple Bar, to prevent any more riotous proceedings; but the next night the sailors renewed their outrages and committed the same acts of violence on two other houses of ill-fame in the Strand, in presence of multitudes of spectators who vociferously cheered them. Other houses in the Old Bailey and Goodman's Fields were treated in the same manner.

Two persons were ultimately convicted for this riot, but only one suffered the death penalty for it. Fielding, it seems, had influenced His Majesty's Council in its decision on the fate of these two men, by representing that as one of them, besides being actively concerned in the riot, had also been guilty of stealing, he alone ought to suffer the sentence of the law. A great outcry and clamour was made by the people at the severity of a sentence, by which a man was doomed to suffer death for an offence which appeared to them to be of a very venial nature. This man was even buried at the expense of the parish in which he resided, and a flattering inscription was written for a monument which was to have been raised to his memory. When the man, whose name was Bosavern Penlez, was to be hanged, a tumultuous assemblage of sailors were round the gallows determined to

Execution of Rioter

rescue him, and a company of soldiers were in readiness at the City boundary in Holborn to act as escort; but the sheriff dispensed with their attendance, keeping only the constables. This courageous action on his part had such an effect upon the sailors that they reluctantly abandoned their design, on the sheriff's promising that the criminal's body should not be given over to the surgeons for dissection.

CHAPTER XII

“Scald Miserable Masons”—The Maypole—Earliest known
Delineation—St. Andrew Undershaft.

WE get a good view of the houses in the Strand (south side) in the picture of “A GEOMETRICAL View of the Grand PROCESSION of the Scald Miserable MASONS, Design’d as they were Drawn up over against Somerset House, in the STRAND, on the twenty Seventh of April, 1742.” It is on two sheets of paper, and has been printed from two sheets of metal. Only a portion is here given, but it shows the houses with their windows filled with spectators; in the shops there are crowds of persons, mostly females, who stand on the show boards, and within the glass. Several coaches have been stopped in order that their occupants might observe the procession; and, near one or two of these coaches, running footmen, with their long staves, are stationed. Several large carts are also stopped. In another portion of the picture we catch, through an opening in the line of shops, a glimpse of the river Thames, with a boat sailing past, and the opposite shore. It is worthy of remark that there are not any signs attached to or painted on the houses.

There had been a similar procession the previous year, which was designed by Paul Whitehead and his friend, Esquire Carey, surgeon to the Prince of Wales. It was not permitted to pass through Temple Bar, because it was intended to insult the Society of Freemasons, whose annual procession was performed at the



PROCESSION OF SCALD MISERABLE MASONS—7TH APRIL 1742.

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WANDSWORTH
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Mock Masons

same time. This picture had the effect of putting a stop to these performances. It appears that the ridicule was originally prompted by a squabble between the Freemasons and the Gormogons, who were supposed to have received their cult from Egypt, and these processions were instituted to ridicule the former body. But another and very potent reason put a stop to them, for we read in the *General Advertiser* of 3rd May 1744: "Yesterday, several of the Mock Masons were taken up by the Constables empowered to impress Men for His Majesty's Service, and confined till they can be examined by the Justices." It was a very good way of stopping these kinds of processions, whether they were of Gormogons, Gregorians, Antigallics, Bucks, etc.—for nothing else seems to have been of avail; as far back as 1721 the king issued a proclamation, on 28th April.

"His Majesty having received information which gives great reason to suspect that there have been lately, and still are, in and about the Cities of London and Westminster, certain scandalous Clubs or Societies of young persons who meet together; and, in the most impious and blasphemous manner insult the most sacred principles of our Holy Religion, affront Almighty God himself, and corrupt the minds and morals of one another; and, being resolved to make use of all the authority committed to him by Almighty God to punish such enormous offenders, and to crush such shocking impieties, before they increase and draw down the vengeance of God upon this nation: His Majesty has thought fit to command the Lord Chancellor, and his Lordship is hereby required to call together His Majesty's Justices of the Peace of Middlesex and Westminster, and strictly to enjoin them in the most effectual manner, that they, and every of them do make the most diligent and careful inquiry and search

Old Time Aldwych

for the discovery of this and the like sort tending in any wise to the corruption of principles and manners of men, and to lay before his Lordship such discoveries, as from time to time may be made, to the end that all proper methods may be taken for the utter suppression of all such detestable practices, &c."

Beneath the print is engraved a description of the Procession, thus: "1. The Grand Sward Bearer, or Tylor, carrying y^e Sward of State, a present of Ishmael Abiff to old Hyram, King of y^e Saracens to his Grace of Wattin, Grand Master of y^e Holy Lodge of St. John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell. 2. Tylers or Guarders. 3. Grand Chorus of Instruments. 4. The Stewards in three Gutt carts drawn by Asses. 5. Two famous Pillers Jachin and Boaz. 6. Three great Lights. The Sun Hieroglyphical to Rule the Day, the Moon Emblematical to Rule the Night, A Master Mason Political to Rule his Lodge. 7. The Entered Prentices Token. 8. The letter G, famous in Masonry for differencing the fellow-Crafts Lodge from that of Prentices. 9. The funeral of a Grand Master according to y^e Rites of y^e Order, with the 15 Loving Brethren. 10. A Master Mason's Lodge. 11. Grand Band of Musick. 12. Two Trophies, one being that of a Black Shoe-boy and Link Boy, the other that of a Chimney Sweeper. 13. The Equipage of the Grand Master, all y^e Attendants Wearing Mystical Jewels."

But this is a bare outline, and may be better described thus: The cavalcade is led by "1," a miserable-looking man riding a sorry horse, wearing a fool's cap, having a long wig, probably part of a sheep's skin, or mass of false hair hanging down his back, and bearing a toy sword. He is followed by "2," a man on foot, wearing ragged clothes, and having a ribbon with masonic insignia hanging from his neck; he carries a long staff,

Procession Described

or stick, with a rag on the end of it. A second "2" represents a similar person. The next division of the design "3" comprises a numerous group. First are two men mounted on asses of a forlorn description; one of these men wears a Punch's cap and blows a marrow bone by way of trumpet: the other man, with two butter tubs instead of kettle-drums at his saddle-bow, belabours those vessels with two ox bones. Next to these riders are many men of haggard appearance, and in rags and false hair, performing on cow's horns, pans, marrow bones and cleavers, a salt box, flageolets and trumpets; several of these men have masonic emblems dangling by ribbons from their necks; a mounted performer on tubs, another rider with a flageolet, a man on foot, with a pipe, the whole group being of a ludicrous character, complete this part. In a line with these are three small carts drawn by donkeys "4"; each cart contains two men, who ride in grotesque hats, holding sticks on their knees, and in mock state. "5" shows two men bearing large models of two Ionic pillars stuck on the ends of staves. After these is a group of boys, carrying and using instruments of the same kind as those in the hands of their forerunners. The next comer is a man on crutches. After this cripple are two men bearing pictures of the Sun and Moon "6," "6"; also another "6," the last being a man in the act of making water. "7" is a picture of "Hand in Hand" borne by a very emaciated person. Two men bear on poles a picture of masonic insignia, comprising a star with a trail, and "G" in its centre. A man with a wooden leg walks behind the last-named group, and, by means of a long pole, props up the picture. "9" consists of a large wagon, loaded with men, and drawn by six asses; on one of each pair of these animals is a postillion: the first of the three has

Old Time Aldwych

a very large hat and wig, the hair of which hangs down his back; the second carries a rag on a pole; the third wears a Punch's hump and a peaked hat. In the wagon appears to be the coffin of the Grand Master, with a pall over it, and the chief mourners sitting on the sides of the vehicle, which sides are decorated with rags on staves, by way of flags; all the men are ragged and look miserable, some are pretending to weep, others affect to lament aloud; most of them wear tall hats and large masses of dishevelled hair; one has a long plait or *queue* of hair hanging from under his hat. These are followed by two more riders, with the tubs and cow horn respectively. Next advances a group of boys, on foot, with fifes; and, after these, another band of walking performers on uncouth instruments as before. "10" consists of a picture of a coffin, with "M.B." on it: this is borne on tall poles by two men, one of whom has a wooden leg; it is supported from behind by a third man. "11" consists of another band of performers on fifes; these are on foot, except their leaders, who ride asses of woe-begone aspect; the leaders respectively sound tubs and a cow horn. These are followed by "12," two boys, one of whom bears aloft, stuck on the end of a long pole, a "trophy," which consists of a broom, brush, chimney-sweep's shovel, and a stool; on a similar pole his companion displays a broom, brush, and stool. A second "11" succeeds the last-mentioned group of boys and men with similar noise-producing instruments; the leader is a tub drummer, with cow's horns on his head; the band consists of boys followed by two men. After these, two men advance, bearing ragged pennons on poles. A picture of a Sun, with "G" in the middle of the emblem, is borne aloft by a man with a wooden leg; he is succeeded by two men on foot, who lead a

Procession Described

caparisoned donkey without a rider ; this is the "horse" of state belonging to the supposed deceased Grand Master. Of the group which accompanies this animal, one man wears a stag's horns, others have tall fools' caps, one beats a salt box, some blow pipes and horns as before. A cart, which has been rudely adapted to resemble a chariot of state, follows these persons ; it is drawn by six horses, on two of which are postillions, and attended by men with javelins and pennons. In the cart four persons are seated ; he who is in the place of honour, or represents the Grand Master, has the head of an ass ; at his side sits a man with a lamb's head ; one of the other men has a long plaited *queue* hanging down his back, the fourth wears what was doubtless meant for a piece of sheep's skin, instead of a wig.

In the previous year (1741) another print on the same subject was published, called "Mock Masonry ; or, the Grand Procession," but it is nothing like as imposing a cavalcade as that I have taken ; but it has some verses attached :

1.

"Pray vat be dis vine Show we gaze on?
O 'tis the Flower of all the Nation,
De Cavalcade of de Free Mason.

Doodle, doodle, do.

2.

And who be dose who stride Jack Ass-a
And blow de Cow-horns as dey pass-a?
Dat Secret I no guess—alas-a,

3.

Who be dose who next 'em come-a,
With butter tubs for Kettle Drum-a?
O dat's a Mystery too, Sirs—mum-a.

4.

Who's he with Cap and Sword so stern-a?
Modest *Montgomery of Hibern-a*,
Who guard de Lodge, and de Key who turn-a.

Old Time Aldwych

5.

Vats he with Truncheon leads the Van-a ?
By gar, one portly proper Man-a,
Dat's *Jones* who marshals all the Train-a.

6.

Who dose who ride in Carts and Six-a,
With such brave Nicknacks round der Necks-a ?
Dey be de Stewards *de Feast* who fix-a.

7.

But who be dose who next approach-a ?
Lord, vat fine Horses draw der Coach-a !
O ! de Grand Masters I dare vouch-a.

8.

Now *C—r—y*, *Wh—th—ad*, me intend-a,
For, Thanks dis Sage Advice to lend-a !
Ne'er break your *Jest* to *lose* your Friend-a."

There are several other illustrations extant of these mock processions, but I can only notice the proclamation attached to one, which is without date.

"THE REMONSTRANCE of the Right Worshipful the GRAND MASTER, &c., of the SCALD MISERABLE MASONS.

"WHEREAS, by our Manifesto some time past, dated from our Lodge in Brick Street, WE did, in the most explicite manner, vindicate the ancient rights and privileges of this Society ; and, by incontestable arguments evince our superior dignity and seniority to all other institutions, whether Grand Volgi, Gregorians, Hurlo-thrumbians, Ubiquarians, Hiccubites, Lumber Troopers, or Free Masons ; yet, nevertheless, a few persons under the last denomination, still arrogate to themselves the usurped titles of Most Ancient and Honourable, in open violations of truth and justice ; still endeavour to impose their false mysteries (for a premium) on the credulous and unwary, under pretence of being part of our brotherhood ; and still are determin'd with drums, trumpets, gilt

Scald Miserable Masons

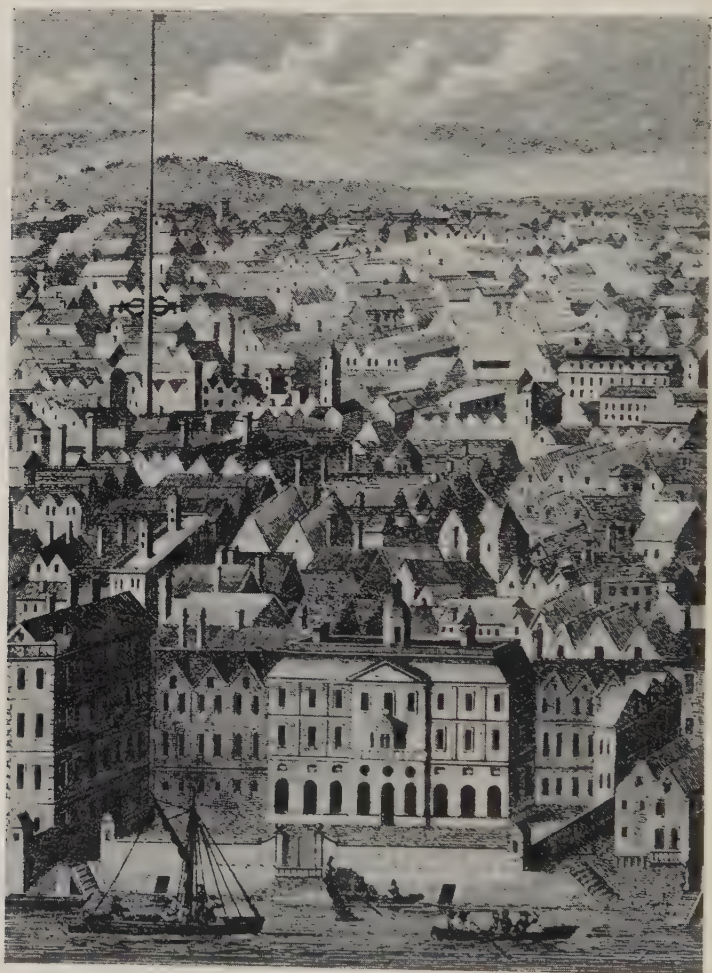
chariots, and other unconstitutional finery, to cast a reflection on the primitive simplicity and decent economy of our ancient and annual peregrination: WE therefore think proper, in justification of OURSELVES, publicly to disclaim all relation, or alliance whatever, with the said Society of Free Masons, as the same must manifestly tend to the sacrifice of our dignity, the impeachment of our understanding, and the disgrace of our solemn mysteries; AND FURTHER, to convince the public of the candour and openness of our proceedings, WE here present them with a key to our procession; and that the rather, as it consists of many things emblematical, mystical, hieroglyphical, comical, satirical, political, &c.

“AND WHEREAS many, persuaded by the purity of our constitution, the nice morality of our brethren, and peculiar decency of our rites and ceremonies, have lately forsook the gross errors and follies of the Free Masonry, are now become true *Scald Miserables*: It cannot but afford a most pleasing satisfaction to all who have any regard for truth and decency, to see our procession increased with such a number of proselytes; and behold those whose vanity, but the last year, exalted them into a borrowed equipage, now condescend to become the humble cargo of a sand cart.”

In the accompanying illustration we get an excellent idea of “the Strand, and its neighbourhood, anno 1700, looking from Arundel House northwards, with the Maypole, and Garland, standing on the site of the Strand Cross”; and according to this view, the Maypole dominated all its surroundings. Undoubtedly, the most popular of all May-day customs, throughout the country, was the dancing round the Maypole; an institution of which we do not know the antiquity. The first mention I can find of it is in *The Anatomie of Abuses* (edit. 1583, p. 94), by the old Puritan, Philip Stubbes, who says:

Old Time Aldwych

"But their cheefest jewell they bring from thence, is their Maie pole, which thei bring home with great veneration,



THE STRAND AND NEIGHBOURHOOD—1700.

as thus. Thei have twentie or fourtie yoke of Oxen, every Ox having a sweete Nosegaie of flowers placed on the tippe of his horns, and these Oxen drawe home the

The Maypole

Maie Pole (this stinkyng Idoll rather) which is covered all over with Flowers and Herbes bound aboute with strynges, from the top to the bottome, and some tyme painted with variable colours, with two or three hundred men, women and children following it with great devotion. And this beyng reared up, with handkerchiefes and flagges streamyng on the toppe, they strawe the ground aboute, binde greene boughes about it, sett up Sommer Haules, Bowers and Arbours hard by it. And then fall they to banquet and feaste, to leape and daunce about it, as the Heathen people did at the dedication of their Idolles, whereof this is a perfect pattern, or, rather, the thyng it selfe."

The earliest known representation of a Maypole is in a stained glass window, representing Morris dancing, at Betley Hall, Staffordshire. This window is said to be *temp.* Henry VIII., and the pole, which is planted on a grassy mound, is painted yellow, with a black spiral band running its whole length. It is adorned with a white pennon, and a flag, bearing the cross of St. George. This painting of the poles is alluded to by Shakspeare in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Act III. sc. ii.), where Hermia addresses Helen as "Thou painted Maypole!" Herrick thus sings of the garlands which adorned it:

"The Maypole is up,
Now give me the cup;
I'll drink to the Garlands around it;
But first, unto those
Whose hands did compose
The glory of flowers that crown'd it."

The accompanying illustration is taken from a very rare book, *Mayday a poem*, Lon. 1749, 12°, and here we see the village lasses and lads dancing to the music of a pipe and tabor. It was a recognised amusement, especially on a *Sunday*, so much so that James I., on returning from Scotland, through Lancashire, in 1615,

Old Time Aldwych

judged it requisite to issue a Proclamation forbidding any interference with the lawful Recreations of his subjects, either in "Dancing, Archery, Vaulting, &c., or in having May Games, Whitson Ales, and Morris Dances, and the setting up of May poles, and other sports there-



MAY-DAY—1749. (See p. 161.)

with used, so as the same be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or neglect of Divine Service." In the following year that Proclamation was extended to all parts of the kingdom; and it was again ordered to be enforced by Charles I., by his letters mandatory, dated at Westminster, 18th October 1633. This command the

St. Andrew Undershaft

King ordered to be promulgated by Episcopal authority, through all the Parish Churches of every Diocese, but it so greatly excited the displeasure of the Puritans, that they afterwards used it as an argument for expelling the Bishops from the House of Peers, and condemning Archbishop Laud.

There was a Maypole on every village green, and there were, certainly, two in London, rather more famous than the others: one in Leadenhall Street, where it gave its name to the parish church—St. Andrew *Under Shaft*, and the famous one in the Strand. The former Maypole was never raised after “Evil May Day” in 1517, when the ’prentices rose against the foreigners in London, but remained reposing on its hooks, till 1550, when a Puritan curate of St. Catherine Cree, preaching at St. Paul’s Cross, said that the shaft was made an idol. Stow says: “I heard his sermon, and I saw the effect that followed; for, in the afternoon of that present Sunday, the neighbours and tenants to the said bridge, over whose doors the said shaft had lain, after they had well dined, to make themselves strong, gathered more help, and, with great labour, raising the shaft from the hooks whereon it had rested two and thirty years, they sawed it in pieces, every man taking for his share so much as had lain over his door and stall, the length of his house; and they of the alley divided among them so much as had lain over their alley gate.”

CHAPTER XIII

Pasquil's Palinodia—Destruction of Maypoles—The Erection of the New Maypole—Charity Children in the Strand—Fate of the Maypole—Milkmaid's Dance—Coach Stand—Death of Mr. Perceval—The "Forge"—The City's Suit and Service—Strand Bridge.

WE do not know when the Maypole was erected in the Strand, but we do know that it was there in 1619, for it is mentioned in *Pasquil's Palinodia*, which was published in that year :

"Fairely we marched on, till our approach
Within the spacious passage of the *Strand*
Objected to our sight a *Summer-broach*¹
Ycleap'd a *May-pole*, which in all our Land
No City, Towne, nor streete can parrallell,
Nor can the lofty spire of Clerken-well,
Although he have the 'vantage of a Rocke,
Pearch up more high his turning weather-cock.

Stay, quoth my Muse, and here behold a signe
Of harmeless mirthe and honest neighbourhood,
Where all the Parish did in one combine,
To mount the rod of peace, and none withstood :
Where no *capritious Constables* disturbe them,
Nor Iustice of the peace did seeke to curbe them,
Nor peevish Puritan in rayling sort,
Nor overwise Church-warden spoyl'd the sport.

Happy the age, and harmelesse were the dayes
(For them true loue and amity was found),
When every village did a May-pole raise,
And *Whitson-ales*, and May-games did abound :

¹ A broche or spit.

Destruction of Maypoles

And all the lusty Yonkers in a rout
With merry Lasses daunc'd the rod about,
Then friendship to their banquets bid the guests,
And poore men far'd the better for their feasts.

Then Lords of Castles, Mannors, Townes and Towers
Reioyc'd when they beheld the Farmer's flourish,
And would come downe unto the Summer-Bowers
To see the country-gallants dance the Morrice.

But since the Summer-poles were overthrowne,
And all good sports and merriments decay'd,
How tunes and men are chang'd, so well is knowne
It were but labour lost if more were said.

Alas, poore *May-poles*, What should be the cause
That you were almost banish't from the earth?
You never were rebellious to the lawes,
Your greatest crime was harmelesse honest mirth.

But I doe hope once more the day will come,
That you shall mount, and pearch your *Cocks* as high
As ere you did, and that the Pipe and Drum
Shall bid defiance to your enemy :

And that all *Fidlers* which in corners lurke,
And have beene almost staru'd for want of worke,
Shall draw their *Crowds*, and at your exaltation
Play many a fit of merry recreation."

These verses would seem to be prophetic of its downfall, but when it was destroyed is unknown; very probably before the Parliamentary Edict of 6th April 1644: "The Lords and Commons do further order and ordain, that all and singular *May-poles*, that are, or shall be erected, shall be taken down, and removed by the constables, bossholders, tithing-men, petty constables, and churchwardens of the parishes, where the same be, and that no Maypole be hereafter set up, erected, or suffered to be set up within this kingdom of England, or dominion of Wales; the said officers to be fined five shillings weekly till the said Maypole be taken down."

When the King "shall enjoy his own again," the

Old Time Aldwych

Laws and Ordinances of the Commonwealth were abrogated, and the people released from the tyranny of the Puritans, resumed all their former amusements, plays, horse-racing, mumming, and among other things which were restored were the Maypoles. And so it came to pass that the Maypole in the Strand was re-erected, and tradition assigns that this was done at the expense of John Clarges, a blacksmith, who had a forge at the south-eastern corner of Maypole Alley (afterwards Newcastle Street), whose daughter, the famous Nan Clarges, was first Monk's mistress, and, afterwards, Duchess of Albemarle, but there seems to be no foundation for the rumour. However, it was re-erected, and with great pomp, as we find in a tract called *The Cities Loyalty Display'd*, "Printed in the Year 1661":

"Let me declare to you the manner in generall of that stately Cedar erected in the Strand, 134 feet high, commonly called the May-pole, upon the cost of the Parishioners there adjacent, and the gracious consent of his Sacred Majesty, with the Illustrious Prince, the Duke of *York*.

"This Tree was a most choice and remarkable Piece, 'twas made below Bridg, and brought in two parts up to *Scotland Yard*, near the King's Palace, and from thence it was conveyed, *April* the 14th, to the Strand to be erected. It was brought with a Streamer flourishing before it, Drums beating all the way, and other sorts of Musick; it was supposed to be so long, that Landsmen (as Carpenters) could not possibly raise it; Prince *James*, the Duke of *York*, Lord High Admirall of *England*, commanded twelve Seamen off a Boord, to come and officiate the business, whereupon they came and brought their Cables, Pullies, and other tacklins, with six great Anchors; after this was brought three Crowns, bore by three men bare-headed, and a Streamer displaying all

The Strand Maypole

the way before them, Drums beating, and other Musick playing; numerous multitudes of people thronging the streets, with great shouts and acclamations of joy.

“The May-pole then being joynted together, and hoopt about with bands of Iron, the Crown and Vane with the King’s Armes richly gilded, was placed on the head of it, a large top like a Belcony was about the middle of it. This being done, the Trumpets did sound, and in four hours’ space it was advanced upright, after which, being established fast in the ground, six Drums did beat, and the Trumpets did sound again, great shouts and acclamations the people gave, that it did ring throughout the whole Strand; after that came a Morice Dance finely deckt, with purple Scarfs in their half-shirts, with a Taber and Pipe, the antient Musick, and Danced about the May-pole, after that Danced the rounds of their Liberty. Upon the top of this famous Standard is likewise set up a royal Purple Streamer, about the middle of it is placed four Crowns more, with the King’s Arms likewise; there is also a Garland set upon it of various colours, of delicate rich favours, under which is to be placed three great Lanthorns, to remain for three honours; one for Prince *James*, Duke of *York*, Lord High Admirall of *England*; the other for the Vice-Admirall; and the third for the Rear-Admirall: these are to give light in dark nights, and to continue so as long as the Pole stands, which will be a perpetual honour for Seamen; it is placed as near hand as they could guess, in the very same pit where the former stood, but far more glorious, bigger, and higher than ever any one that stood before it; and the Seamen themselves do confess that it could not be built higher, nor there is not such a one in *Europe* beside, which highly doth please his Majesty, and the Illustrious Prince, Duke of *York*; little children did much rejoyce, and antient

Old Time Aldwych

people did clap their hands, saying, golden dayes began to appear. I question not but 'twill ring like melodious Musicke throughout every County in *England*, when they read this Story, being exactly pen'd."

Malcolm, in his *Londinium Redivivum* (vol. iv. 281), says: "The old May-pole, often mentioned as in a state



CHARITY CHILDREN IN THE STRAND—7TH JULY 1713.
THE MAYPOLE.

of decay, in various publications, which stood almost on the site of the present church, was removed in 1713, and a new one erected July 4, opposite Somerset House, which had two gilt balls and a vane on the summit, decorated on rejoicing days with flags and garlands." If this be so, it is represented in the accompanying illustration of "the Charity Children in the Strand"

The Strand Maypole

before mentioned: but if it is correct, they must have been very quick in building the seats around it, as this procession took place on 7th July. Strype speaks of it three times. In one place he says: "This part of the Strand is of some note, for its *May-Pole*, the Parts about it bearing the name of the *May-pole* in the *Strand*, but its Beauty is lost, there being nothing standing but the Lower Part, which is about twenty Foot high; Nor is that now standing, a new Church being erected there. Here is a Watch-House for the better Security of the Streets in the Night, as being so great a Thoroughfare: And adjoining to the Watch-house is a Conduit, but dis-used." In another place, speaking of that Cross, where the Itinerant Justices used to sit, and which, in Stow's time was "headless," he says: "In the room of which Cross of later years was placed a *May Pole*, commonly called *The Maypole in the Strand*, being about 100 Foot in Height. This being grown old and decayed, was Anno 1717¹ obtained by Sir *Isaac Newton*, Kt., of the Parish; and being taken down, was carried away thro' the City in a Carriage of Timber,² unto *Wansted* in *Essex*. And by the leave of Sir *Richard Child*, Bart., Lord *Castlemaine*, granted to the Reverend Mr. *Pound*, Rector of that Parish, was reared up and placed in his Park there; the Use whereof is for the raising of a Telescope, the largest in the World, given by a French Gentleman³ to the Royal Society, he being a Member thereof. It had not long been set up there, when these Witty Verses were fast'ned upon it by an unknown Hand:

'Once I adorn'd the *Strand*,
But now have found
My way to *Pound*,
In Baron *Newton's* land.

¹ Or four years after Malcolm says it was renewed!

² In another place he gives the date April 1718.

³ M. Hugon.

Old Time Aldwych

Where my aspiring Head aloft is rear'd,
T'observe the Motions of the Ætherial Herd ;
Here sometimes rais'd a Machine by my side,
Thro' which is seen the sparkling Milky Tide :
Here, oft I'm scented with a balmy Dew,
A pleasing Blessing which the *Strand* ne'er knew.
There stood I only to receive Abuse
But here, converted to a nobler Use :
So that with me, all Passengers will say,
I'm better far than when the Pole of *May*."

In 1667 Nell Gwynn was living in the fashionable part of Drury Lane, the Strand end, at the top of Maypole Alley, and over against the gate of Craven House. We know that this alley took its name from the Maypole, which was at its bottom, and on 1st May 1667 Pepys records: "To Westminster; in the way meeting many milk maids with their garlands upon their pails, dancing with a fiddler before them; and saw pretty Nelly standing at her lodgings' door in Drury Lane, in her smock sleeves and bodice, looking upon one: she seemed a mighty pretty creature."

The milkmaids in London had a practice, as obsolete now as they are, of dancing before their customers' houses on May-Day. Misson, who published his description of England, in 1698, tells us all about it: "On the first of May, and the five or six days following, all the pretty young country girls that serv the town with milk dress themselves up very neatly, and borrow abundance of silver plate, whereof they make a pyramid, which they adorn with ribbands and flowers, and carry upon their heads, instead of the common milk pails. In this guise, accompanied by some of their fellow milkmaids, and a bagpipe and fiddle, they go from door to door, dancing before the houses of their Customers, in the midst of boys and girls, who follow them in troops, and everybody gives them something." And Steele notices, in No. 166

Milkmaids Dancing

of the *Tatler* (2nd May 1710): "I was looking out of my parlour window this morning, and receiving the honours which Margery, the milkmaid to our lane, was doing me, by dancing before my door with the plate of half her customers on the head," etc. A little later, and they did not carry the plate themselves, but hired stout porters to bear the silver trophy. *May Day* (1749) says thus of them:

"But, now, to town the Muse repairs,
Where different sports the Milk-maid shares,
And different scenes are shown;
The Garland form'd of massy plate,
Beneath, sometimes, whose ponderous weight,
Two stout Hibernians groan.

With ribbons deck'd in gaudy show,
From house to house with glee they go,
And trip a frolick round;
Yet hirelings these, who dance away,
Drest by subscription for a day,
And drunk at night are found."

The Maypole was, as Strype says, known as a district of London, and here was a hackney coach stand. Pepys says: "And I with Sir J. Minnes to the Strand May-pole; and there light out of his Coach, and walked to the New Theatre," and he frequently alludes to the Maypole in connection with coaches. He has also left us several recollections of this part of the Strand. On one occasion he had received £60 in trust for someone else, on 2nd February 1660. "After I had received the money, we went homewards; but, over against Somerset House, hearing the noise of guns, we landed and found the Strand full of soldiers. So I took my money, and went to Mrs. Johnson, my Lord's sempstress; and, giving her my money to lay up, Doling and I went upstairs to a window, and looked out, and saw the Foot face the Horse and beat them back, and stood bawling and calling in the street for a free

Old Time Aldwych

Parliament and money. By and by, a drum was heard to beat a march coming towards them, and they got all ready again and faced them, and they proved to be of the same mind with them; and so they made a great deal of joy to see one another." "11th February 1660. The number of bonfires, there being fourteen between St. Dunstons and Temple Bar, and at Strand Bridge I could, at one time, tell thirty-one fires. In King Street, seven or eight, and all along, burning, and roasting, and drinking for rumps. There being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down. The butchers at the May-pole in the Strand rang a peal with their knives when they were going to sacrifice their rump."

It was in the neighbourhood of the Maypole that, in 1677, Mr. Robert Perceval, a young man of good family, second son of the Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Perceval, Bart., but very dissipated, aged 19, and had fought as many duels, was found dead with a deep wound under his left breast, and with all the signs of a fearful struggle having taken place—he had been robbed and his pockets thoroughly ransacked. A stranger's hat was found near him, which was suspected to be that of the celebrated *roué*, Robert Fielding, the notorious "Beau," but the crime was never brought home to him.

Hereabouts was the "Forge," for which suit and service is still done by the City; although it is robbed of much of the ceremony which used to accompany it when the Sheriffs went in State to render suit therefor. Why it is done now I know not, for the "Forge" has long since been non-existent. Blount, in his *Tenures of Land and Customs of Manors*, tells us that "Walter le Brun, farrier, in the Strand, in Middlesex, was to have a piece of ground in the parish of St. Clement, to place a forge there, he rendering yearly six horse-shoes for it. This rent was anciently wont to be paid to the Exchequer every

Civic Tenures

year—for instance, in the first year of King Edward I. when Walter Marescallus (the farrier) paid at the Stone Cross six horse-shoes, with nails, for a certain building which he held of the King, *in Capite*, opposite the Stone Cross; in the second year of King Edward I.; in the fifteenth year of King Edward II., and afterwards. It is still rendered at the Exchequer to this day by the Mayor and citizens of London, to whom, in process of time, the said piece of ground was granted.”

At the same time it was usual to do suit and service for another tenure, about which Blount tells that “Walter de Aldeham holds land of the King, in the More, in the County of Salop, by the service of paying to the King yearly, at his Exchequer, two knives (whittles), whereof one ought to be of that value (or goodness) that, at the first stroke, it would cut asunder, in the middle, a hazel rod of a year’s growth, and of the length of a cubit (half a yard), etc., which said service ought to be done in the middle of the Exchequer, in the presence of the treasurer and barons, every year, on the Morrow of St. Michael; and the said knives (whittles) to be delivered to the Chamberlain to keep for the King’s use.”

How this land came into the possession of the City of London I know not—but the faggot is duly chopped, and the six horse-shoes and sixty-one nails are duly counted every year. The whittles are now bill-hooks, and the faggot is but a mere toy, as may be seen by a visit to the Guildhall library. How the ceremony used to be performed we may learn from the *Gentleman’s Magazine* for 1804 (p. 965): “The Ceremony in the Court of Exchequer, which vulgar error supposed to be an unmeaning farce, is solemn and impressive; nor have the new Sheriffs the least connection either with chopping of sticks or counting of hob-nails. The tenants of a manor in Shropshire are directed to come forth, to per-

Old Time Aldwych

form their suit and service; on which the senior Alderman below the Chair steps forward and chops a single stick, in token of its having been customary for the tenants of that manor to supply their Lord with fuel. The owners of a forge in the parish of St. Clement (which formerly belonged to the City, and stood in the high road from the Temple to Westminster, but now no longer exist) are then called forth, to do their suit and service; when an officer of the Court, in the presence of the senior Alderman, produces six horse-shoes and sixty-one hob-nails, which he counts over in form, before the Cursitor Baron, who, on this particular occasion, is the immediate representative of the Sovereign." Nowadays the procedure is much simplified. By the 22 & 23 Vict. c. 21 (13th August 1859), "An Act to regulate the Office of Queen's Remembrancer, and to amend the Practice and Procedure on the Revenue Side of the Court of Exchequer," it is provided by sec. xliii. that "Whereas it has been the Custom on the Occasion of the Presentation of the Sheriffs of the City of London and Sheriff of Middlesex, Elect, for the Approval of the Crown to the Barons of the Court of Exchequer, at Westminster, to render, on behalf of the Corporation of the said City, in open Court, certain ancient Rents and Services in respect of the Tenure of a Piece of Waste Ground, called the *Moors*, in the County of *Salop*, and of a Tenement, called *the Forge*, in the Parish of *St. Clement Danes*, in the County of *Middlesex*:—The said Rents and Services in respect of this said Ground and Tenement may be rendered by the Corporation of *London*, or by their Agent in that Behalf, at the Office of the Queen's Remembrancer, on the Morrow of *St. Michael*, or between that day and the Morrow of *St. Martin*, and the proper Entries in respect thereof shall be made as heretofore on the Rolls of the Court."

Strand Bridge

Where Strand Lane now is was a bridge over a rivulet which here ran into the Thames, as Stow says: "Then had ye in the high street a fair Bridge, and under it, a lane or way, down to the Landing Place on the Bank of Thames."

CHAPTER XIV

Places destroyed by the Lord Protector—The Parish without a Church—The new Church—Sad Accident—Catherine Street—Wimbeldon House—D'Oyley—Exeter House—Exeter 'Change—Its Mutations—Wild Beasts—Madness and Death of Chunece—"The Lady's Disaster."

WE now come to speak of those places which were destroyed by the Lord Protector in order to build his mansion of Somerset House, and the simplest plan is to take Stow's description. After mentioning Arundel House, he says: "Next beyond the which, on the street side, was sometime a fair Cemitory, or Churchyard, and in the same a Parish Church, called of *the Nativity of Our Lady, and the Innocents, in the Strand*; and of some (by means of a Brotherhood kept there) called of *St. Ursula in the Strand*. In former times it was an Highway leading from *London to Westminster*, and so was called in a Deed. *Roger*, called the *Amner*, gave and confirmed to *Roger de Mulent, or de Molend*, who was also called *Longespé*, Bishop of *Chester*, in the year 1257, a Parcel of Land and Buildings, lying in the Parish of *St. Mary le Strand* without *London* toward *Westminster*, and the same to hold to the said *Roger* and his Successors by the Yearly Rent of three Shillings at *Easter*, for the purchase of which the said Bishop gave twenty Marks or Silver. On this land we presume *Chester Inn* was built, situate by *St. Mary le Strand*. For near adjoining to the said Church, betwixt it and the River of *Thames*, was an Inn of Chancery, commonly called *Chester's Inn*, because it belonged to the Bishop of *Chester*. By others,

The Old Strand

named of the Situation, *Strand Inn*. Then was there an House belonging to the Bishop of *Landaff*; for I find in Record, the fourth of *Edward* the Second, that a vacant Place, lying near the Church of our Lady at *Strand*, the said Bishop procured of *Thomas*, Earl of Lancaster, for the enlarging of this House.

“Then was the Bishop of *Chester* (commonly called of *Lichfield* and *Coventry*), his Inn, or *London Lodging*. This House was first builded by *Walter Langton*, Bishop of *Chester*, Treasurer of *England*, in the reign of *Edward* the First. And next adjoining to it, was the Bishop of *Worcester's Inn*. All which, to wit, the Parish of *St. Mary at Strand*, *Strand Inn*, *Strand Bridge*, with the Lane under it, the Bishop of *Chester's Inn*, the Bishop of *Worcester's Inn*, with all the Tenements adjoining, were, by the Commandment of *Edward*, Duke of *Somerset*, Uncle to *Edward* the Sixth, and Lord Protector, pulled down and made level ground, in the Year 1549. In place whereof, he builded that large and goodly house, now called *Somerset House*. King *James* the First his Queen made this House her Palace: And on *Shrove Tuesday Ann.* 1616, she feasted the King here. At this time the King changed the Name of this House, appointing it to be henceforth called *Denmark House*. This House was much repaired, and beautified and improved by new Buildings and Enlargements by this Queen. Who also brought hither Water from *Hyde Park* in Pipes.”

The Duke of Somerset promised to erect another church in place of the one he had pulled down, but he never did so, and from the time of *Edward VI.* to the reign of Queen *Anne* the parish was without any church. The Duke was very forgetful of his promises: he borrowed the Library of the Corporation of the City of London—and totally forgot, or intentionally omitted, to return them.

Old Time Aldwych

The parishioners were fain to make use of St. Clement Danes or St. John the Baptist in the Savoy, until the Act was passed for building fifty new churches within the Bills of Mortality. The architect, Mr. James Gibbs, who built St. Martin's in the Fields, laid the first stone on 25th February 1714; the steeple was finished 7th September 1717, but the church, for some reason or other, was not consecrated till 1st January 1723. The accompanying illustration, taken in 1753, shows Old Somerset House, and the Watch-House, in front of the church, which for very many years went by the name of "The New Church in the Strand." The architect tells us that "The New Church in the Strand, called St. Mary le Strand, was the first building I was employed in after my arrival from Italy, which being situated in a very public place, the Commissioners for building the fifty churches, of which this is one, spared no cost to beautify it. It consists of two orders, in the upper of which the lights are placed; the wall of the lower being solid to keep out noises from the street, is adorned with niches. There was, at first, no steeple designed for this church, only a small campanile, or turret for a bell, was to have been over the west end of it; but at the distance of 80 feet from the west front there was a column 250 feet high, intended to be erected in honour of Queen Anne, on the top of which her statue was to be placed. My design for this column was approved by the Commissioners, and a great quantity of stone was brought to the place for laying the foundations of it; but the thoughts of erecting that monument being laid aside upon the Queen's death, I was ordered to erect a steeple, instead of the campanile first proposed. The building being then advanced 20 feet above the ground, and therefore admitting of no alteration, east or west, I was obliged to spread it from north to south, which makes



ST. MARY-LE-STRAND AND OLD SOMERSET HOUSE—1753.

PUBLIC
WANDSWORTH
LIBRARY

Accident at St. Mary's

the plan oblong, which should otherwise have been square."

Some portion of the work, at all events, seems to have been scamped; for, on the Proclamation of Peace, on 29th April 1802, a sad accident occurred through defective workmanship, just as the heralds came abreast with the church. A balustrade runs round the roof of the church, adorned with stone urns, at equal distances; a man, amongst the number of those who crowded on the roof to see the procession, happened to lean his hand on the urn before him: as he stretched forward it fell off; several of the spectators saw the stone at the instant of its fall, and raised a loud shriek, which created dreadful alarm in all who were in the area before the church. In its descent it crushed three young men: one was struck on the head, and died instantly; the second was so much wounded that he died on the way to the hospital, and the third died two days afterwards. In addition, several other persons were also hurt in consequence of the pressure about the spot.

The urn, which weighed about 200 lbs., struck and carried away in its descent a part of the cornice of the church; it stood upon a socket, and had only been secured by a wooden spike running up the centre, which was totally decayed, and consequently broke off with a very slight degree of pressure: it broke to pieces a large flagstone in the area below, and sunk some inches into the ground.

Some early prints of this church have a statue of Queen Anne on the cupola over the west entrance, but it was never set up.

North of St. Mary-le-Strand Church is Little Drury Lane (now Newcastle Street, and so called from its old ground landlord, John Holles, Duke of Newcastle). Of this part of the world Strype says: "*Little Drury Lane,*

Old Time Aldwych

which from the *Strand* runneth up to *Great Drury Lane*: this Part being but narrow, is troublesome by the passage of Coaches and Carts, it being a great Thoroughfare, and the Houses being but ordinary, makes it to be ill inhabited. . . . I shall next shew the Buildings lying Westwards and separate from the Body of the Parish: to wit; In the *Strand*, beginning at *Wimbleton House*, a very handsome, large House, and so all the Houses, with *Exeter Exchange* and *Court* and the Houses adjoining. . . . *Katharine Street*, a very large and handsome Street, with good Houses, well inhabited chiefly by noted Tradesmen, especially the East Side, not many years since built. This Street cometh into the *Strand*, against *Somerset Yard Gate*."

Between Katherine Street and Wellington Street formerly stood Wimbledon House, the town mansion of Sir Edward Cecil, third son of Thomas, Earl of Exeter, and who was, in the reign of Charles I., created Viscount Wimbledon, which title died with him. The house was built at the end of the sixteenth or early in the seventeenth century, and was burnt down in 1628. It was never rebuilt, and on its site were erected shops, one of which D'Oyley, the famous haberdasher of Queen Anne's time, occupied. It was modernised, but the name remained until not so many years ago, when it was absorbed into the *Morning Post*, which in its turn has had to come down to make way for Aldwych.

There was nothing of importance until Exeter 'Change was reached, and here is my limit for the Strand. Of it, Strype says: "To begin with *Exeter Exchange*, with *Exchange Alley*, *Exeter Street*, and *Burleigh Street*, &c. These formerly belonged to *Exeter House* and Garden, until thus built, being a large House belonging to the Earls of *Exeter*, and was anciently said to be a *Convent*, or *Monastery*; and that Covent Garden, then unbuilt,

Exeter 'Change

was the Gardens and Fields belonging to it. This *Exchange* contains two Walks below Stairs, and as many above, with Shops on each side for Semsters, Milenners, Hosiers, &c. The Builders judging it would come in great Request, but it received a Check in its Infancy, I suppose by those of the *New Exchange*, so that, instead of growing in better Esteem, it became Worse and Worse ; insomuch that the Shops in the first Walk next the Street can hardly meet with Tenants, those backwards lying useless, and those above converted to other Uses ; and here the Managers of the *Land Bank* keep their Office."

Malcolm, in his *Londinium Redivivum* (1807), gives fuller details of this building : " From St. Mary's Church to Exeter Exchange the Strand is very wide, well built, and adorned with the richest architecture ; but the latter building, covered with daubings of monsters and wild beasts, and exhibiting parts of vast Corinthian pillars, has a strange grotesque appearance, not a little heightened by the antique habit of Pidcock's sham yeomen of the guard, stationed to invite spectators to the dens of lions, tigers, elephants, ouran-outangs, and a long *et cetera* of animals, rare and interesting to the people of England.

" If I understand Stow correctly, the original Exeter House, or Inn, for the residence of the Bishops of that See, was situated on the south side of the Strand near the river, '*on the river of Thames*,' are his words ; if so, the present Exchange probably stands on the site of the gardens belonging to the Inn ; though Iliff's Survey of London asserts the site was the Bishop of Durham's stables. Our venerable author was ignorant of the founder, but says that Walter Stapleton erected part of the palace in the reign of Edward II., which received an additional hall in that of Henry VI., through the munifi-

Old Time Aldwych

cence of Edmond Lacie, one of Stapleton's successors. After this period Exeter House changed its name to Paget, Leicester, and Essex House. The Lord Treasurer Salisbury seems to have held this, or some other ground in the reign of James I., when he erected an Exchange with the ruins of Durham House stables, which the King condescended to name Britain's Burse. But Exeter 'Change, as it now stands, is said to have been built by Dr. Barbon, a speculator in houses, about the time of William and Mary, who mortgaged it to the Duke of Devonshire and Sir Francis Child. In 1728 the lower storey contained 48 shops, occupied by milliners, and the upper was in the tenure of the Company of Upholsterers.

"John Gumley rented all the upper part of this building in 1714 as a warehouse for pier and other glasses framed and unframed; and Sir Richard Steele dedicated part of one of his papers to that which Mr. Sneer in the *Critic* would have called a puff direct in his favour.

"In the year 1721 Mr. Normand Cany exhibited a singular bed, for 2s. 6d. each person, the product of his own ingenuity, the curtains of which were woven in the most ingenious manner with feathers of the greatest variety and beauty he could procure; the ground represented white damask, mixed with silver, and ornaments of various description, supporting vases of flowers and fruit. Each curtain had a purple border, a foot in breadth, branched with flowers shaded by scarlet; the valence and bases the same. The bed was 18 feet in height, and, from the descriptions, must have been a superior effort of genius, equally original with the works of the South Sea Islanders, whose cloaks, mantles, and caps grace the collection formed by Captain Cook, now preserved in the British Museum.

"The great room was opened in 1764 as an improve-

Pidcock's Menagerie

ment on modern Statute Halls; and, in 1772, Lord Baltimore's body lay in state there, previous to its interment at Epsom. It was afterwards for some years in use as a warehouse for the reception of the printed volumes of the Rolls and Journals of the House of Lords.

"Pidcock's exhibition of wild beasts next succeeded, and seems to have superseded all other uses. The lower apartment is now a complete thoroughfare, lined on each side with cutlery, trinkets, books, etc. etc., artfully and



EXETER 'CHANGE—*circa*. 1820.

pleasingly displayed for sale. A collection of animals that may vie with this (if it be not a colony of the same under another name) is Mr. *Polito's*, exhibited at the principal fairs round London."

Malcolm was prophetic. Polito did succeed Pidcock, and he, in his turn, when he died in 1814, was superseded by Mr. Cross, who had the last menagerie there. It existed till 1828, when the animals were removed to the King's Mews, where now stands the National Gallery, and in 1830 Exeter 'Change had vanished.

There was a great excitement in Exeter 'Change on

Old Time ^{MARKS} Aldwych

27th February 1826. Chune, the performing elephant, who had trodden the boards of Covent Garden Theatre in the pantomime of "Harlequin Padmanaba," had gone "must," and was entirely beyond control. As it created much sensation at the time, I venture to give a description which appears in Hone's *Every Day Book*, vol. ii.:

"For the information of persons not acquainted with the menagerie, it is necessary to state that it occupies the entire range of floor above Exeter 'Change, the lower part of which edifice within side is occupied by shops belonging to Mr. Clarke. This part of the building, on the business of the day being concluded, is closed every night by the strong folding gates at each end, which, when open, allow a free passage to the public through the 'Change. It will be perceived, therefore, that the flooring above is Mr. Cross's menagerie, or at least, that very important part of it which is allotted to his matchless collection of quadrupeds. A large arrangement of other animals is in other apartments, on a higher storey. Nero—not Wombwell's Nero, which was baited by that showman at Warwick, but a lion not only in every respect finer than his namesake, but, in short, the noblest of his noble species in England—occupies a den in the menagerie over the western door of the 'Change. Other lions and animals are properly secured in their places of exhibition, on each side of the room, and the east end is wholly occupied by the den of the elephant; its floor being supported by a foundation of brick and timber, more than adequate to the amazing weight of the animal. The requisite strength and construction of this flooring necessarily raise it nearly two feet from the flooring of the other part of the menagerie, which, though amazingly stable, and capable of bearing any other beast in perfect safety, would immediately



EXETER 'CHANGE AND LYCEUM THEATRE—1828.

PUBLIC
MANUSCRIPT
COPY

“ Chune ”

have given way beneath the tread of the elephant, and, had he forced his den, he must have fallen through.

“ As soon, therefore, as his sudden death was resolved on, Mr. Tyler¹ went down to Mr. Clarke, and, acquainting him of the danger arising out of the immediate necessity, suggested the instant removal of every person from the 'Change below, and the closing of the 'Change gates. Mr. Clarke and all belonging to the establishment saw the propriety of their speedy departure, and in a few minutes the gates were barred and locked. By the adoption of these precautions, if the elephant had broken down the floor no lives would have been lost, although much valuable property would have been destroyed; and, in the event contemplated, the animal himself would have been confined within the basement. Still, however, a slight exertion of his enormous strength could have forced the gates. If he had made his entry into the Strand it is impossible to conjecture the mischief that might have ensued in the crowded thoroughfare from his infuriated passion.

“ On Mr. Tyler's return upstairs from Mr. Clarke it was evident, from the elephant's extreme rage, that not a moment was to be lost. Three rifles, therefore, were immediately loaded, and Mr. Herring,² accompanied by Mr. Stevens's³ assistant, entered the menagerie, each with a rifle, and took their stations for the purpose of firing. Mr. Tyler pointed out to the keepers the window places, and such recesses as they might fly to if the elephant broke through, and, enjoining each man to select a particular spot as his own exclusive retreat, concluded by showing the danger of any two of them running to the same place for shelter. The keepers,

¹ A friend of Mr. Cross, acting for him.

² Brother-in-law of Mr. Cross, and a good shot.

³ A gunmaker in High Holborn.

Old Time Aldwych

with their pikes, placed themselves in the rear of Mr. Herring and his assistant, who stood immediately opposite the pen at about a distance of 12 feet. Mr. Herring requested Cartmell to call in his usual tone to the elephant when he exhibited him to visitors, on which occasion the animal was accustomed to face his friends with the hope of receiving something from their hands. Cartmell's cry of 'Chunee! Chunee! Chuneelah!' in his exhibiting tone, produced a somewhat favourable posture for his enemies, and he instantly received two bullets aimed from the rifles towards the heart; they entered immediately behind the shoulder blade, at the distance of about 3 inches from each other. The moment the balls had perforated his body he made a fierce and heavy rush at the front, which further weakened the gates, shattered the side bar next to the dislodged storey post, and drove it out into the menagerie. The fury of the animal's assault was terrific, the crash of the timbers, the hallooing of the keepers in their retreat, the call for 'Rifles! Rifles!' and the confusion and noise incident to the scene, rendered it indescribably terrific. The assailants rallied in a few seconds, and came pointing their spears with threats. Mr. Tyler having handed two other rifles, they were discharged as before; and, as before, produced a similar desperate lunge from the enraged beast at the front of his den. Had it been effective, and he had descended on the floor, his weight must inevitably have carried it, together with himself, his assailants, and the greater part of the lions and other animals into the 'Change below, and, by possibility, have buried the entire menagerie in ruins. 'Rifles! Rifles!' were again called for, and from this awful crisis it was only in the power of Mr. Tyler and some persons outside to load quick enough for the discharge of one rifle at a time. The maddened animal

“Chunee”

turned round in his den incessantly, apparently with the design of keeping his head from the riflemen, who, after the first two discharges, could only obtain single shots at him. The shutter inside of a small grated window, which stood in a projection into the den at one of the back corners, was now unshipped, and from this position Mr. Herring fired several shots through the grating. The elephant, thus attacked in the rear as well as the front, flew round the den with the speed of a race-horse, uttering frightful yells and screams, and stopping at intervals to bound from the back against the front. The force of these rushes shook the entire building, and excited the most terrifying expectation that he would bring down the entire mass of wood and iron work, and project himself among his assailants.

“After the discharge of about thirty balls he stooped and sunk deliberately on his haunches. Mr. Herring, conceiving that a shot had struck him in a vital part, cried out—‘He’s down, boys!—he’s down!’ and so he was, but it was only for a moment; he leaped up with renewed vigour, and at last eighty balls were successively discharged at him from different positions before he fell a second time. Previous to that fall Mr. Joshua Brookes had arrived with his son, and suggested to Mr. Herring to aim especially at the ear, the eye, and the gullet.

“The two soldiers despatched from Somerset House by Mr. Cross came in a short time before Mr. Brookes, and discharged about three or four rounds of ball cartridge, which was all the ammunition they had. It is a remarkable instance of the animal’s subjection to his keeper that, though in this deranged state, he sometimes recognised Cartmell’s usual cry of ‘Chunee! Chunee! Chuneelah!’ by sounds with which he was accustomed to answer the call, and that, more than once, when

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Cartmell called out, 'Bite, Chunce!—bite!' which was his ordinary command to the elephant to kneel, he actually knelt, and in that position received the balls in the parts particularly desired to be aimed at. Cartmell therefore kept himself as much as possible out of view as one of the assailants, in order that his voice might retain its wonted ascendancy. He and Newsam and their comrades took every opportunity of thrusting at him. Cartmell, armed with a sword at the end of a pole, which he afterwards affixed to a rifle, pierced him several times.

"On the elephant's second fall he lay with his face towards the back of the den, and with one of his feet thrust out between the bars, so that the toes touched the menagerie floor. At this time he had from a hundred and ten to a hundred and twenty balls in him; and, as he lay in a posture, Cartmell thrust the sword into his body to the hilt. The sanguinary conflict had now lasted nearly an hour, yet with astonishing alacrity he again rose, without evincing any sign that he had sustained vital injury, though it was apparent he was much exhausted. He endeavoured to conceal his head by keeping his rear to the front; and lest he should either make a successful effort at the gate or, on receiving his death wound, fall backwards against it, which would inevitably have carried the whole away, the keepers availed themselves of the juncture to rapidly lash the gates of his den with a chain and ropes so securely that he could not force them without bringing down the entire front.

"Mr. Herring now directed his rifle constantly to the ear: one of these balls took so much effect that the elephant suddenly rushed round from the blow, and made his last furious effort at the gates. Mr. Tyler describes this rush as being the most awful of the whole.

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The Lady's Disaster

If the gates had not been firmly lashed the animal must have come through; for by this last effort he again dislodged them, and they were kept upright by the chain and ropes alone. Mr. Herring, from this time, chiefly directed his fire at the gullet; at last he fell, but with so much deliberation, and in a position so natural to his usual habits, that he seemed to have lain down to rest himself. Mr. Herring continued to fire at him, and spears were ran into his sides, but he remained unmoved, nor did he stir from the first moment of his fall. Four or five discharges of a rifle into his ear produced no effect; it was evident that he was without sense, and that he had dropped dead, into the posture wherein he always lay when alive."

I remember seeing a piece of Chunee's hide tanned, in the window of a leather merchant in High Street, St. Giles.

It must have been somewhere close by this place which was the scene of

"THE LADY'S DISASTER.

Drawn from the Fact. Occasioned by a Lady carelessly tossing her Hoop too high in going to shun a little Chimney Sweeper's Boy, who fell down just at her Feet.

"If Fame say true, in former Days,
The Fardingale was no disgrace;
But what a Sight is here reveal'd!
Such as our Mothers ne'er beheld.
A Nymph in an unguarded hour,
(Alas! who can be too secure?)
Dire fate has destin'd to be seen,
Entangled in her wide Machine.
While Carmen, Clowns, & Gentle folks
With satisfaction pass their Jokes."

CHAPTER XV

The Lyceum—Its Changes—Dr. Arnold and the English 'Opera House—New Theatre—Covent Garden Theatre wrecked—Lyceum burnt—New Lyceum—Its Fortunes—"Sublime Society of Beef Steaks"—Motor Cars—Sir Charles Dance's Carriage—Its Career—Office of *Household Words*—Its Inception—Exeter Arcade—The Story of the Gaiety Theatre.

IN the illustration of Cross's menagerie at Exeter 'Change, the Lyceum Theatre is shown on the north side of the Strand. It was built on ground formerly belonging to Exeter House, and a building called "The Lyceum" was there erected in 1765. It was originally constructed for the exhibitions of the "Society of Artists"; but after the establishment of the Royal Academy in 1768, the rooms were no longer required for that purpose, and the premises were then purchased by Mr. Lingham, a breeches-maker in the Strand, who at different times let them for various purposes. Here the once famous Flockton, the conjurer, exhibited his "Puppet Show" and sleight of hand; in 1789, Charles Dibdin rented the place for his "Sans Souci" entertainment; then Hardy, and afterwards Philip Astley took it for equestrian performances; followed by Cartwright with his Musical Glasses, and Philipstal with his popular "Phantasmagoria." Here Robert Palmer gave his entertainment, "Portraits of the Living and Dead"; Collins, his "Evening Brush"; Incledon, his "Voyage to India"; Bologna, his "Phantascopia"; and Lloyd, his "Astronomical Exhibition." Here, too, in 1803, Winsor exhibited his experiments in gas-lighting, and lit up the

The Lyceum

place by means of coal gas. At one time it was "A School of Defence"; at another, a Roman Catholic Chapel; and, finally, huge painted placards were spread outside announcing that the "White Negro Girl," or the "Porcupine Man," were to be seen within.

Dr. Arnold, the musical composer, had converted a portion of the structure into a theatre as early as 1794; but, unable to obtain a licence, through the opposition of the managers of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, he had to abandon the speculation. In 1809, Samuel John Arnold, a son of Dr. Arnold, applied for, and obtained from the Lord Chamberlain, a licence for the theatre within the building, and it was opened on 26th June of that year. The licence was for the representation of operas in three acts, as performed at regular theatres, without the dialogue being converted into recitative; but the concluding entertainments were to be restricted to spectacles, ballets, or pieces consisting of songs and recitatives. The Drury Lane Company took refuge here when their theatre was burnt down; and Mr. Arnold obtained special permission, in consequence, to play musical farces. Braham was engaged for a few nights, and "The English Opera House," as the theatre was then called, seemed a thriving property, but its proprietor did not think so, and on 15th September 1815 the old theatre finally closed, and the acting manager announced, in a farewell address, that it was the intention of the proprietor early in the ensuing summer "to greet the patrons of the present Lyceum in an entirely new, airy, and commodious theatre." For this purpose, Mr. Arnold obtained a new lease of ninety-nine years from the Marquis of Exeter, at an annual ground rent of £800, and erected his new theatre at an expense, including the new houses which surrounded it, of about £80,000.

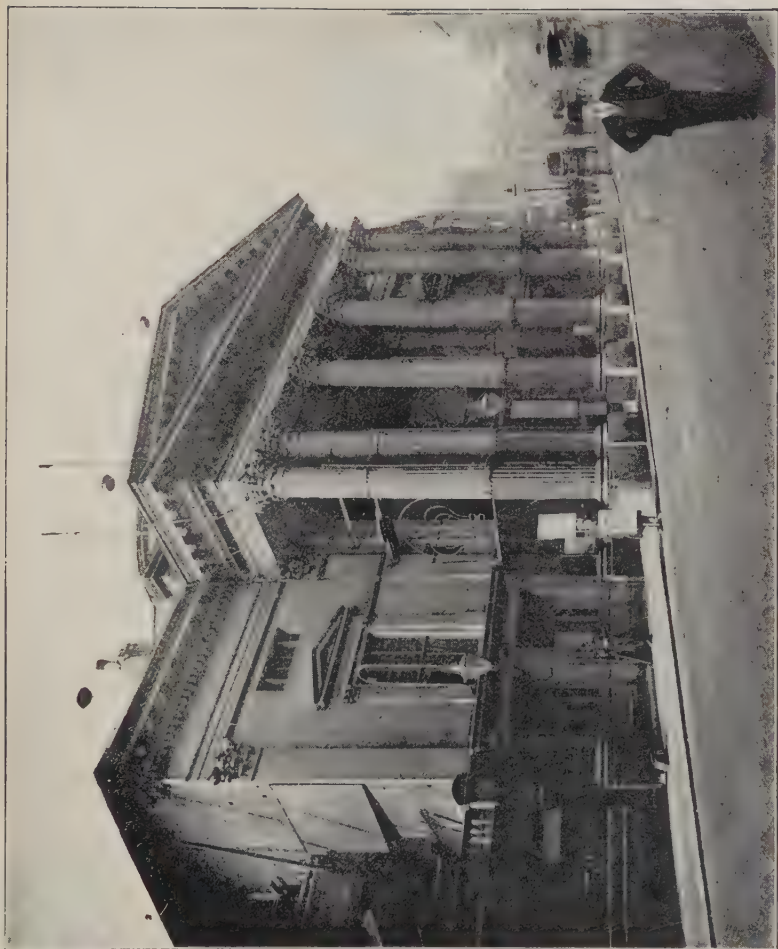
The new theatre was opened on 15th June 1816.

Old Time Aldwych

At the end of 1817 the experiment was tried of dividing the performances into two distinct parts, so that there might be two audiences on the same evening: each performance consisting either of a three-act opera, or of a short opera and a ballet. The first performance began at six, and lasted till nine; the second began at half-past nine, and ended about midnight. The arrangement was not successful, and the scheme was soon abandoned. On 2nd April 1818, Charles Mathews, the elder, commenced the series of his famous entertainments, with *Mail Coach Adventures*, which was performed forty nights that season, and led to his repeating these marvellous monologues for several years. Mr. Arnold's agreement was to pay all the expenses of the theatre, authors, etc., and to secure to Mr. Mathews an annuity of £1000 for life, on condition that Mr. Arnold should receive all the profits for seven years.

Covent Garden Theatre made its own gas; and, in November 1828 the gas-holder exploded, causing the house to be closed; and from 20th November to 3rd December the company played at the English Opera House. Edmund Kean here played Shylock; Charles Kemble being Bassanio; Miss Jarman, Portia; and Miss Goward (Mrs. Keeley), Nerissa. In the course of the same week Kean acted Sir Edward Mortimer and Sir Giles Overreach.

In January 1830 the theatre was let for a short season of French plays, and then it met the fate of most theatres; it was burnt down. This happened on 16th February 1830, and it and the surrounding houses were absolutely destroyed. The loss was estimated at about £80,000, and poor Mr. Arnold was uninsured. He did not lose heart, and his company found a refuge during the summer, first at the Adelphi, and afterwards at the Olympic. In 1833 the Adelphi was rented for the



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LYCEUM THEATRE—1903.

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The Lyceum

summer season. Mr. Arnold's friends rallied round him, and he was enabled to build the present Lyceum Theatre, the principal entrance to which was on the west side of the then new street which joined Bow Street to the Strand, making a fairly direct communication between the north of London and Waterloo Bridge. It opened on 14th July 1834, and it had very varied fortunes. It was the home of opera, under Balfe; there were promenade concerts; and in 1842 Jullien undertook them, succeeding Carter, the Lion King, with his performing lions and tigers; equestrianism was tried afterwards. In 1844 the theatre was under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, who presumably did well. The versatile Charles Mathews, junior, became lessee in October 1847, and so remained till March 1855. These were the palmy days of the Lyceum, in which were produced Planché's gorgeous Extravanzas, "The King of the Peacocks," "The Island of Jewels," etc., than which nothing more beautiful was ever put upon the stage. Beverley's scenery alone was worth paying the admission money for.

From the time when Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris had this theatre until 1878 it had very mixed fortunes. Then it came into the hands of Sir Henry Irving, whose long and prosperous career there is well known. As a theatre (for it is to be turned into a Music Hall) it will now probably very soon become a thing of the past, and I have therefore given an illustration of it.

Here was revived the "Sublime Society of Beef Steaks," which owed its origin in 1735 to George Lambert, the scene-painter at Covent Garden Theatre, during the management of John Rich; he often dining off a steak cooked over a fire in the painting room, a feast frequently shared with a friend. When Covent

Old Time Aldwych

Garden was rebuilt, the Club held its symposia at the Shakspeare Tavern in the Piazza; afterwards at the Lyceum Theatre, and, on its destruction by fire, at the Bedford Hotel; and, on its rebuilding in 1834, it again reverted to the Lyceum. But is not its history written by Walter Arnold in 1871?

We are apt to look upon motor cars as a modern invention, but as a matter of fact they are not, for a Frenchman named Cugnot made a steam carriage in 1769; it ran at $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour, and carried four persons; a capsize in a street in Paris led to the imprisonment of the inventor, and put a stop to further trials. Murdock in 1782, Watt in 1784, Symington in 1786, made models, but the first one that actually ran in England was made by Trevithick and Vivian in 1803. This attained a speed of 8 or 9 miles an hour in the streets of London; but want of encouragement and difficulties produced by bad roads compelled Trevithick to turn his attention to more profitable matters. This illustration shows a very early motor car (1833). "Sir Charles Dance's Steam Carriage leaving the Office in Wellington Street, Strand, for Brighton." Sir Charles Dance's carriage, built by Gurney, ran between Gloucester and Cheltenham four times a day, regularly for four months, from 21st February to 22nd June 1831, during which time it carried nearly 3000 persons and travelled 3564 miles. On 23rd June it broke the hind axle in running through heaps of stones, which had been purposely laid across the road in order to drive it off. In consequence of this, and the prohibitory tolls levied, he gave up in disgust, and took his carriage off the road. It is referred to in the *Times*, May 12, 1831:

"STEAM CARRIAGES ON COMMON ROADS.—Some of the advantages to the public from the use of steam on the turnpike roads already begin to show themselves.



WELLINGTON STREET AND SIR CHARLES DANCE'S STEAM CARRIAGE—1833.

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Motor Car

Previous to the starting of the steam coach between Gloucester and Cheltenham, the fares were four shillings each person—now the public are taken by all the coaches at one shilling per head. On Tuesday morning the steam coach took thirty-three passengers from Cheltenham to Gloucester in fifteen minutes.”

In 1833 Sir Charles Dance came to London with his steam coach, had it repaired by Maudslay, and on 20th September, same year, it left London for Brighton with twelve gentlemen and three other persons, and the omnibus in tow, and did the 52 miles in 5 hours 16 minutes, exclusive of stoppages. It did the return journey in 5 hours minus 1 minute. On the 12th October it and the omnibus were put upon the road between Wellington Street and Greenwich, where it continued to run for a fortnight, with a view of showing the public in London what could be done. The proprietor had no intention of making it a permanent mode of conveyance, and therefore kept the company as select as he could, by charging half a crown for tickets each way.

They were liable to their accidents then as now, as we see from the *Times*, 7th June 1831, quoting the *Glasgow Chronicle*:

“Mr. Gurney’s steam carriage was, on Wednesday night, blown to pieces by an explosion of the boiler. The catastrophe occurred in the square of the cavalry barracks, where the carriage was exhibiting. It had gone round the square several times, and stopped at one corner of it, when some people got out. Two boys, sons of Mr. Maclure, of the Port Eglinton Inn, at that time entered, and were about to be followed by two gentlemen, when the boiler burst with a tremendous explosion, and shattered the vehicle into numberless pieces. The two boys were very seriously injured in the face and

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other parts of the body, and they now lie in very precarious circumstances."

Of this carriage Tom Hood wrote in his poem of "Conveyancing"—

"Instead of *journeys*, people now
May go upon a *Gurney*,
With steam to do the horses' work,
By *powers of attorney* ;

Tho' with a load, it may explode,
And you may all be *undone* !
And find you're going *up to heaven*,
Instead of *up to London*."

A Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to examine into this novelty, and they reported thereon to the House on 12th October 1831. The conclusion of the Report was as follows :—

"Sufficient evidence has been adduced to convince your Committee :

"1. That carriages can be propelled by steam on common roads at an average rate of ten miles per hour.

"2. That at this rate they have conveyed upwards of fourteen passengers.

"3. That their weight, including engine, fuel, water, and attendants, may be under three tons.

"4. That they can ascend and descend hills of considerable inclination with facility and safety.

"5. That they are perfectly safe for passengers.

"6. That they are not (or need not be, if properly constructed) nuisances to the public.

"7. That they will become a speedier and cheaper mode of conveyance than carriages drawn by horses.

"8. That, as they admit of greater breadth of tire than other carriages, and as the roads are not acted on so injuriously as by the feet of horses in common

“Household Words”

draught, such carriages will cause less wear of roads than coaches drawn by horses.”

Almost exactly opposite the Lyceum Theatre, and at the south-eastern corner of Exeter Street, stood an old house with a bow window, which was incorporated of late years with the Gaiety Theatre, but was once the office of *Household Words*, a magazine founded by Charles Dickens in 1850, and here he might be found whenever in town. Writing to his friend and biographer John Forster, at the end of 1849, he says: “My notion is a weekly journal, price either three half pence or two pence, matter in part original and in part selected, and always having, if possible, a little good poetry.” As to the title of the magazine, he said: “I want to express in the title, and in the grasp of the idea to express also that it is the thing at everybody’s elbow and in everybody’s foot-step. At the windows, by the fire, in the street, in the house, from infancy to old age, everybody’s inseparable companion.” Dickens was to be editor and Mr. W. G. Wills was assistant editor, a position which he occupied for twenty years. There was very grave discussion over the title, and among the many which occurred to Dickens, were “The Robin,” “Mankind,” “Charles Dickens,” “The Household Voice, or Guest, or Face,” “The Comrade,” “The Highway of Life,” and, finally, “Household Words.” The first number appeared on Saturday, 30th March 1850, and for nine years, until it was merged in *All the Year Round*, it was a very popular magazine.

As to the Gaiety Theatre, no one can tell of its inception better than its originator, so let Mr. John Hollingshead tell his own story:

“Next door to the office of *Household Words*, running from Wellington Street north to Catherine Street, was a narrow passage, or arcade of shops, sometimes erroneously called ‘Exeter ’Change,’ and often confused with the old

Old Time Aldwych

building in the Strand, which stood where Burleigh Street now stands, and contained Cross's menagerie. This old, original 'Change' was pulled down early in the present century (the 19th) for Strand improvements, and the only fragment of it remaining is an architectural scroll with a clock dial, which stands over the shoe shop next door to the Lyceum pit entrance.

"'Exeter Arcade' was never a commercial success. Its shops were always displaying the legend 'to let,' and, if a tenant came in one week, he generally went out the next, especially if he was asked for rent. Bohemian journals, started by writers who wished to be their own editors and masters of a shop boy, obtained a 'local habitation and a name,' in the *Arcade*. The journals were written in the back parlours, and sold or given away across the counters, under which some of the editors slept at night or in the early morning. At the western end of this Arcade, in Wellington Street north, was a tall and very narrow building, such as architects call an 'engaged column,' with rooms like the rooms of a lighthouse, let to people who required modest chambers. Mr. J. L. Toole, at that time engaged at the New Adelphi, where he went from the Lyceum opposite, was the occupant about 1860. There he entertained his friend Henry Irving (then making a trial trip at the Princess's Theatre) and other friends, myself among the number.

"Next to this real Court of Bankruptcy—Exeter Arcade—was the historic office of the *Morning Post*, still existing and much enlarged, having displaced the *Field*, the *Queen*, the *Law Times* and the rest of the group of papers founded or acquired by the late Mr. Serjeant Cox. The proprietors, by this move, obtained a great frontage at the Strand corner of Wellington Street. The oldest and quaintest of the buildings which stood on the Strand front of the block, amongst other shops of less importance,

Strand Musick Hall

was the office of the *Mirror*, that fossil relic of the primary formation of periodical literature. It was a retiring shop, with very small, old time windows, blinking purblind at the busy and progressive thoroughfare. Its proprietor, old Mr. Limbird, peeped with wondering timidity through the dim glass, bewildered by the stream of strange traffic surging past his neglected door. In literature he represented what Miss Linwood represented in public amusements, both being survivors of the time when *Adams's Orrery* formed the legalised Lenten entertainment at the Lyceum or Adelphi, and stray sailors, thinking they were sitting at a play, wanted to know when the broadsword combat was going to begin.

“ This important London island, which I have walked round and briefly described, arrived at the time, in the early 'sixties, when it had to bow to its inevitable destiny. A music hall was projected and built, and a portion of the island was bought for the purpose. The entrance was, of course, on the Strand front, as near the centre as possible, and the place was called the ‘ Strand Musick Hall.’ The late Mr. Syers, a gentleman of capital, education, and ability, was largely connected with it, and he showed his capacity for ‘ variety show ’ management by afterwards making a small fortune at the Oxford Music Hall in Oxford Street. For various reasons, in spite of its position, the Strand Musick Hall was a failure from the day of opening. Its programme, perhaps, was a little in advance of its time, and it is always a mistake to go too far ahead of your audience. The architecture of the place had something to do with it. The word *rococo* expresses much, but it never expressed half enough when used in a description of the ‘ Strand Musick Hall.’ A decorator’s studio, overloaded with samples picked from all nations, was the only thing the place suggested. I took the late Sir Richard Burton

Old Time Aldwych

to see it, and he then considered his education thoroughly completed. He had seen many things, but never, under one roof, anything like this very remarkable building. It soon went into liquidation. The management had much to do with this unsatisfactory ending; but, most probably, the place was supplied a few years before it was wanted.

"No one had the courage to take the Hall and carry on the amusement business on more popular lines. This is a fact that is worthy of a marked record, as there are always many hundreds of people of average intelligence who think they can drive a gig, edit a newspaper, or manage a theatre. The place was dismantled and put up 'to let'; and, at the sale by auction, the plate, glass, and linen of a large restaurant were sold, which proved that part of the original design was to provide eating and drinking in combination with music and singing.

"The empty premises were not long without a purchaser, who kept his name concealed, and did not appear to be in any hurry to utilise his property. The secret was well kept, until the proper time came to disclose it. By that time all the houses in the eastern section of Exeter Street (south side), including the old Fountain Tavern, but leaving the public-house at the corner of Catherine Street and Exeter Street: the Arcade of Impeniosity, miscalled 'Exeter 'Change,' several houses on the west side of Catherine Street from the corner public-house towards the Strand, excluding the *Era* and *Illustrated Times* offices, and all the shops in the Strand (not many) from the Strand corner of Catherine Street up to the *Field* and *Queen* offices, on each side of the Strand Musick Hall entrance, had been acquired by a mysterious capitalist. The secret purchaser of these properties was Mr. Lionel Lawson, part proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper, whose idea was to build a

The Gaiety Theatre

moderately sized and improved theatre, with a restaurant attached, to be called The Gaiety.

“Mr. Lawson employed a rising architect (Mr. C. J. Phipps), who had previously built the Queen’s Theatre for him in Long Acre. They went over to Paris together, and took as their model the Théâtre Lyrique, in the Place du Châtelet, copying the projecting balcony, with small private boxes round the back, instead of the old-fashioned ‘dress circle,’ kept in a line with the supporting columns. Their theatre was practically open on four sides, though neither the Lord Chamberlain nor the Metropolitan Board of Works insisted at that time on any such structural conditions. The plan of the house and its title were settled before I heard that such a theatre was to be erected, and I am not, therefore, entitled to any credit that may attach to its construction. The idea of joining a restaurant to the theatre, where people could dine and walk from their dinner into the playhouse, or, after the performance, could walk from the playhouse into the restaurant for supper, was Mr. Lawson’s, not mine.

“I first heard of the proposed theatre from Mr. Dion Boucicault, who suggested that I should make an offer for the tenancy. I was on friendly terms with Mr. Lawson, and had written occasionally for the *Daily Telegraph*. I had been the stage director of the Alhambra for nearly three years, and had much to do in shaping the entertainments at that Palace of Varieties in the form they bear at present. I did not pose as a capitalist, particularly before a reputed millionaire and a man of financial genius. I treated my means as a joke, but I got the theatre. A literary friend, of all people, whipped up a small syndicate of companions to support me, and we were duly registered as ‘The New Theatres Company Limited; capital, £5000.’ The lease was in my name

Old Time Aldwych

individually, and a board was soon painted and stuck up on the Strand front: 'The Gaiety Theatre. This house, when completed, will be opened under the direction of Mr. John Hollingshead.'

The theatre was opened on Monday, 21st December 1868, with *The Two Harlequins*, an operetta in one act; *On the Cards*, a comedy drama in three acts; and *Robert le Diable*, an operatic extravaganza by W. S. Gilbert. The career of this theatre was successful under the management of both Messrs. Hollingshead and Edwardes, but its site was wanted for the new improvements, and it had to come down, only to arise larger and far more beautiful than before, at the western corner of Aldwych. The final performance took place on Saturday, 4th July 1903. All the old actors of the theatre were assembled on the stage, Sir Henry Irving made a speech, Mr. Edwardes was presented with a handsome pair of silver candelabra, then champagne was uncorked, and then, as reported in the next day's *People*, "The scenes which attended the closing of the Gaiety Theatre in the early hours of the morning, when the great audience had regained the streets, were, probably, more remarkable and enthusiastic than those enacted within the famous playhouse. Practically, everyone from the gallery 'boy' to the stall occupant seemed tardy in leaving the 'home' of burlesque and comedy, and when they eventually departed, expressions such as 'Poor old Gaiety,' and 'Dear old Gaiety,' fell from many lips. 'I wish,' said one lingerer, Kate Vaughan had been present, also Nellie Farren, and Edward Terry. It would have been a pleasure to have seen them; but, as we all know, "Katie" is no more.' And the crowd expressed their sorrow for the demise of the once well-known actress. Old actors and actresses stood by the stage-door, giving reminiscence after reminiscence of those who, years ago,

The Gaiety Theatre

had trodden upon the now doomed stage. A little crowd of youths sang with greatest vigour 'Auld Lang Syne,' in what is now left of Catherine Street. The men in blue were reluctant to give the order to 'Move on,' and the admirers of the old 'house' continued their song until they reached the Strand, their voices still being heard above the din of the traffic."

"LAST OF THE OLD GAIETY.

"The Gaiety Theatre entered on its final stage of existence yesterday afternoon, when Messrs. Horne & Co. submitted for auction the stage on which so many histrionic triumphs have been achieved, the gilt erections of the prosceniums, the floors, panelled doors, partitioning, tons of lead, and even the bricks. Only a week ago dresses and other effects used by members of the Gaiety companies were sold under similar conditions, and attracted the attention and the bids of a large number of costumiers and others. The present sale brought together a different class of purchasers, but the attendance was large and the competition for possession keen. The various lots were 'knocked down' with considerable rapidity, and at fairly good prices. The stage and its supports went for £21, the brickwork for £67, and the ironwork for £135."—*Globe*, 12th August 1903.

CHAPTER XVI

Fashionable Bow Street—The “Cock” Tavern and its Frequenters
—The Old Police Station—Bow Street Runners—Anecdotes of
them—Clement’s Inn—Mention by Shakspeare—The Hall—
The Sundial—Old Custom—Clement’s Lane.

WHILE we are in this neighbourhood, Bow Street must not be forgotten. It was at one time a very fashionable part of London, and many illustrious men are associated with it. In the epilogue of one of Dryden’s plays (*King Arthur*), spoken by Mrs. Bracegirdle, she says :

“I’ve had to-day a dozen billet-doux
From fops and cits, and wits, and Bow Street beaux ;
Some from Whitehall, but from the Temple more ;
A Covent Garden porter brought me four.”

Here lived Edmund Waller the poet, as also his brother poet, the witty Lord Dorset, whose song, “To all you ladies now on land,” is an English classic. Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, was born here. In Bow Street lived the celebrated carver, Grinling Gibbons, as also the painter, Sir Godfrey Kneller, and the physician, Dr. Radcliffe, who left his library to the University of Oxford. Here, too, lived Wycherley with his jealous wife, the widowed Countess of Drogheda, who, when he went to that haunt of dissipation opposite their lodgings, the Cock Tavern, would have him open the window so that she might see that there was no woman in his company. This Cock Tavern was a very lively place, and was the resort of all the rakes in town. Dr. Johnson, when writing on Lord Dorset, is responsible for the following anecdote :—“Sackville, who was then Lord

Bow Street

Buckhurst, with Sir Charles Sedley and Sir Thomas Ogle, got drunk at the 'Cock' in Bow Street, by Covent Garden, and going to the balcony exposed themselves to the public in very indecent postures. At last, as they grew warmer, Sedley stood forth naked, and harangued the populace in such profane language that the public indignation was awakened. The crowd attempted to force the doors; and, being repulsed, drove in the performers with stones, and broke the windows of the house. For this misdemeanour they were indicted, and Sedley was fined five hundred pounds. What was the sentence on the others is not known. Sedley employed Killigrew and another to procure a remission of the King, but (mark the friendship of the dissolute!) they begged the fine for themselves, and exacted it to the last groat." In Bow Street also was Will's Coffee House, the resort of all the wits in London, and sacred to the memory of Dryden, who now and then conferred the honour of a pinch of snuff from his own box.

Of modern times Bow Street is chiefly noticeable for its Police Station, which was established in 1749. A new one was built in 1825, and we have two drawings, here given, of the "Brown Bear," which was pulled down in order to build a new office, and the new office itself. This has now disappeared, as the following cutting from a *Daily News* in the early part of 1897 shows:—"Old Bow Street Police Station is being demolished fast. Its grim old porticoes and dust-covered windows still present a stern front to the modern and sprightly looking Floral Hall on the other side of the road; but it is being attacked in the rear by demolishers, and stone by stone the front is being reached, and will meet the same fate as the building in the rear. A large warehouse will be erected on its site, which belongs to the Duke of Bedford. When the new police station at Bow Street was built,

Old Time Aldwych

the building now being demolished was used as a kind of barracks for single policemen. About twelve months ago the lease fell in. The old charge room is now filled with lumber; the dock in which the prisoners stood has disappeared; the cells, as black as night, and each iron-lined cell door covered with rust, are not yet demolished.



THE "BROWN BEAR," BOW STREET—1825.

(See page 215.)

Gaoler White going over them yesterday with a Bow Street reporter, saw some rusty keys hanging to an old gas bracket. He exclaimed, 'Ah! here are the old keys,' and told how, in the 'good old times' when Seven Dials was Seven Dials, and Drury Lane, Drury Lane, he had seen in the passage adjoining these old cells as many as a dozen men, on a Saturday night, waiting for the doctor to stitch up the wounds sustained in one of

Police Station

the many riots which took place in that district when he was a young constable. 'Many a time,' said he, 'I and others have had to take the boots from men who were kicking the doors and keeping the other prisoners awake.'



POLICE OFFICE, BOW STREET.

(See page 215.)

In a woman's cell a large metal plate on the wall bears letters indicating that it divides the parishes of St. Paul, Covent Garden, and St. Martin in the Fields."

In both these pictures we see the Bow Street runners, of whom Charles Dickens¹ wrote: "The Bow Street

¹ *Letters of Charles Dickens*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 178.

Old Time Aldwych

runners ceased out of the land soon after the introduction of the new police. I remember them very well as standing about the door of the office in Bow Street. They had no other uniform than a blue dress coat, brass buttons (I am not even now sure that that was necessary), and a bright red cloth waistcoat. The waistcoat was indispensable, and the slang name for them was 'red breasts' in consequence."

They were superseded by the "New Police," introduced by Sir Robert Peel in 1829; and we get some idea of the former police force at Bow Street in a Report of a Committee of the House of Commons on the Police of the Metropolis, printed in 1816, when Sir N. Conant, the magistrate at Bow Street, was asked what number of police officers were attached to that establishment? He replied that there were 87 patrols attached to the office, and 13 conductors of that patrol, making together 100; and 8 police officers besides, who had general duties. The patrol and the parish watchmen were for night duty only. During the day the only official was, here and there, a street keeper, a sort of beadle.

In the *Autobiographic Recollections of Professor Pryme* we learn something about these men. Speaking of the watchmen he says: "In addition to these old men, a few officers of higher grade were attached to the Bow Street office, and known by the name of 'Bow Street Runners'; they exercised a general superintendence, visiting occasionally the houses of resort frequented by thieves, and holding some intercourse with them. It was understood between them that a thief when wanted was to offer no resistance, and in return was not to be treated with any violence or unnecessary restraint. Many of these Runners showed great ingenuity in detecting the perpetration of offences. A friend of mine, a barrister, told me that he had the following relation

Bow Street Runners

from Townshend, who was one of the most noted among them. A robbery was committed at a country house in Essex, and one of these men (I think it was Townshend himself) was sent for. He detected on the drive near the house a little hay, which convinced him that a hackney coach had been there. He went to the nearest turnpike and inquired if one had passed through about such a time? The man said, 'Yes,' but he could not remember the number. 'It was 45,' said a boy at play near; 'I'm certain of it, for I shouted as it passed, 'Wilkes and Liberty.' The Runner immediately returned to town, found out No. 45, and summoned the driver of it before a magistrate. The man acknowledged that he had been out of town, but asserted that it was elsewhere he had gone. The magistrate said, 'Turn down his sleeves,' knowing the custom of these men to place the turnpike tickets there, and that there was just a chance that he might not have given up the one that freed him back. It was so, and the ticket proved to be for the Essex route. The man peached, and the other robbers were taken.

"The same friend told me another curious anecdote of the ingenuity of these detectives of former days. A friend of his was invited one evening to meet M'Manus, who had gone down to the North on business, and from his own lips he had the following recital. He (M'M.) was sent for to inspect a house which had been entered by burglars. After careful examination of the locks he pronounced that it was so cleverly done that it could only have been effected by one of three or four men who were skilled in such work. Thereupon he returned to town, and visited one of the houses where thieves resort. Entering into conversation with those he found there, he asked casually, 'Where's such a man?' and I don't see ——,' and presently it came out that one man,

Old Time Aldwych

whom he knew by name, had not been seen since the day of the robbery. His next step was to visit the different coach offices; and, after some inquiries made in vain, he at last discovered that a man like the one in question had gone down with luggage to Oxford the day after the robbery. He took his place for the next day, and when arrived at Oxford set about tracing him in this way. He dressed himself very shabbily, and visited the different little inns in the outskirts of the town, saying at each, 'I want a pot of beer for ——,' naming the man he wished to find. He was met with, 'We don't know such a person here,' to which he replied, 'Oh! it's a mistake, then, no matter,' and so on, till at last the answer was, 'We'll send it.' 'No,' says he, 'that won't do; he's in a hurry, and I am to go with you.' He went, and found his man, and some of the stolen property in his possession."

The new police office and station were opened 4th April 1881.

Let us now walk back to Temple Bar, and glance at Clement's Inn, about which Strype says: "Near unto this Church, on the north side, is *St. Clement's Inn*, being one of the Inns of Chancery. It hath three Courts, one within another, all old buildings, except a Row in the Garden, which is well built with a Prospect into the Garden, as also into that of *New Inn* adjoining to it, with a Door to open into the said Inn a Days, but shut at Nights; and here is a back Door which gives Passage into *Clare Market*." It was an appendage to the Inner Temple, and is of great antiquity, for on this site was an Inn of Chancery for the education of students in the law in the time of Edward IV., as, according to Dugdale (*Orig.* p. 187), in a *Record of Michaelmas*, 19 Edw. IV. (1479), it is spoken of as then, and *din ante*, an Inn

Clement's Inn

"hominum Curia Legis temporalis, necnon hominum Consiliariorum ejusdem Legis." In the year 1486 Sir John Cantlowe, Knight, by a lease bearing date the 20th December, in consideration of ninety marks fine, and £4, os. 8d. yearly rent, demised it for eighty years to William Elyot and John Elyot, probably in trust for students of the law. About the year 1528 Cantlowe's right and interest was passed to William Holles, citizen of London, afterwards Knight and Lord Mayor of that city, and ancestor of the Dukes of Newcastle, one of whom—John, Earl of Clare, son and successor of Sir John Holles, the first Earl—demised it to the then principal and fellows.

Shakspeare has left us a glimpse of the roystering student life at this Inn in his day—in *Hen. iv.* Part II. Act iii. sc. 2 :

"*Shallow.* I was once of Clement's Inn, where, I think, they will talk of mad Shallow yet.

"*Silence.* You were called—lusty Shallow, then, cousin.

"*Shallow.* By the Mass, I was called any thing; and I would have done any thing indeed, and roundly too. There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and black John Bare, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele, a Cotswold man;—you had not four such swinge-bucklers in all the Inns of Court again."

Then Shallow tells of Sir John Falstaff breaking "Skogan's head at the court gate, when he was a crack not thus high: and the very same day did I fight with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's Inn."

"*Shallow.* Oh, Sir John, do you remember since we lay all night in the windmill in St. George's Fields?

"*Falstaff.* We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow.

"*Shallow.* I remember at Mile End Green (when I

Old Time Aldwych

lay at Clement's Inn) I was then 'Sir Dagonet' in Arthur's show."

Then Falstaff says of Shallow: "I do remember him at Clement's Inn, like a man made after supper of a cheese-paring."

The Old Hall, which was built in 1715, is no longer recognisable, and the courtyards and gardens are built over, and a portion of the property is sold and converted



CLEMENT'S INN HALL—1855.

into a huge block of residential and business chambers. In *Notes and Queries* for 22nd March 1884 is a cutting from the *Daily News*: "The first steps towards the transformation of this picturesque nook in the busy neighbourhood of the Strand have already been taken. The well known 'black boy' holding the sundial, which has stood in the centre of the grass plot for more than a century and a half, has now disappeared, having been sold for twenty guineas, and removed by the purchaser.

The "Black Boy"

The interesting series of old portraits, full length and otherwise, which hung in the dining hall in the Inn, have also, we believe, been disposed of for similarly low prices. The figure of the black boy, which was brought from Italy and presented to the Inn by Lord Clare about the beginning of the eighteenth century, has always been considered to possess great merit; and, if it is rightly described as a casting in bronze, ought to have been worth considerably more than the sum named." This was the figure upon which was found pasted the lines—

From cannibals thou fled'st in vain :
Lawyers less quarter give ;
The first won't eat you till you're slain,
The last will do't alive.

I believe it was afterwards presented to the Inner Temple.

There once was a curious custom in this Inn, which is recorded in *Notes and Queries* (1 S. V. 201): "I am an attorney; one of my predecessors was Steward of Clement's Inn. He died, and his partner removed from the Inn to the City. I was articled to the partner, and I recollect that, up to the time of his death, which occurred in 1837, he used to receive an annual visit from the minor officials of the Inn, beadle, porter, etc., who presented four oranges and received in return half a guinea. I used generally to suck the oranges, but it never entered my head to inquire what was the origin of the custom."

Before the Law Courts were built, Clement's Inn was reached from the arches in Pickett Place, which are shown in the illustration relating to the lottery of this property, which was also the entrance to Clement's Lane, which contained some very picturesque old houses, woefully fallen from their former high estate; as we may

Old Time Aldwych

see by the accompanying illustration from a water-colour sketch by Shepherd, 1852.

Among the celebrities who lived in Clement's Lane is said to be Oliver Cromwell; but, if we want to know what the place was like before the great alterations, we must turn to Mr. Diprose's pages. He says: "Clement's Lane was entered from Pickett Place, Strand, through a tall archway, when the traveller would find himself in a narrow, stale looking, crooked thoroughfare, filthy and inconvenient, the atmosphere redolent with the exhalations arising from a densely packed population, the majority of whom were of the grimy, grovelling class, living from hand to mouth by uncertain daily labour. The houses in this lane consisted chiefly of the tumble-down rickety kind, many being built with a framework of wood interlaid with brick and then plastered; the ancient casements were replaced by sash windows, the architectural adornments of cornice, mouldings, and columns begrimed with dirt and filth, and nearly the whole looking ready to fall by a puff from a forge bellows. Notwithstanding their decayed and dilapidated appearance, however, many of these houses bore a palatial and noble aspect, and were evidently erected to shelter very different specimens of humanity from those by which they were lately occupied. Several of the houses were as old as the time of James and Elizabeth; one being noted as the scene of some of those royal intrigues and misdeeds which figure in the *Memoires pour servir* of Charles II. and his Court. Nearly all the houses were very remarkable for a quaint style of building. It was once the Bond Street of London. Here Steele showed his gaudy attire, Bolinbroke his stately and noble presence, and Pope that decrepid form which was yet the tabernacle of a noble and expansive soul. Here Swift, with downcast head



OLD HOUSES, CLEMENT'S LANE—1852.

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Clement's Lane

and scowling visage, used to growl to himself, as the mighty satirist made and unmade Cabinets; and the gentle Addison here turned some of those polished periods which have evoked the envy and emulation of after ages. . . . Clement's Lane, from being the polished abode of wit, genius, and fashion, was converted by the ruthless hand of Time into a huge overcrowded den, where blasphemy, rags, gin, hollow-eyed poverty, and stunted industry were all fearfully huddled together.

"Where noble dames once moved with costly and flowing trains, a short time since women in rags rocked to sleep the children of misery, to whom hunger gave a fearful vitality; and where courtiers used to exchange the polished bow of recognition, fearful and brutal collisions between man and man took place. Upon the once polished floor, now crusted in its filth, where stately revelry held its court, human beings lay stretched, in that association which extreme misery only knows; and the once elegant boudoir of some dead duchess was inhabited by seven or eight wretched human beings; doors stood ajar with the gaping look of poverty and desolation, where the loud resounding knock of some tall, gold-laced menial were once heard; and where the flaxen-haired children of wealth once sported, neglected children in filth and rags dozed out their wretched existence.

"About the middle of Clement's Lane was an entrance to a large house, having also an entrance in Plough Court; at one time this was used as a poor-house, but for many years past it has been a lodging house, as many as eighteen families residing there.

"The Irish in this dreary region lived, as they always do, apart and among themselves, carrying with them the many virtues and vices of their native land, and never becoming absorbed in the nation to which, for years,

Old Time Aldwych

they may be attached. Swindlers, thieves, and tramps may surround them, but do not, in general, affect them. Tom Malone still renews, upon English ground, his feuds with the O'Learys, commencing not within the memory of man; and some Bridget O'Rafferty pays



OLD HOUSE, CLEMENT'S LANE—1806.

Ellen O'Connor for evidence given by her grandfather against the rebels of '98.

"There are blackened vocalists called niggers, who delight the gaping crowds morning, noon, and night in and around the metropolis, who are in the habit of making themselves up with burnt cork, striped trousers,

Clement's Lane

and long-tailed coats, huge collars, woolly hair, and other characteristics of the genuine Negro;—numbers of these interesting blacks might daily be seen emerging with lively steps and cheerful voices, dressed in their grotesque costumes, from under the tall archway leading into Pickett Street, on their way to amuse a generous public, and receive their coppery approbation. Rice, when he jumped ‘Jim Crow’ thirty years since, little thought of being the progenitor of such a large family of coloured melodists as appear necessary in the present day for providing *al fresco* entertainments for laughter-loving crowds.”

CHAPTER XVII

Holywell Street—The Well—The Old “Dog” Tavern—Character of the Street—The “Half Moon”—Lyon’s Inn—Sir Edward Coke—Description of the Inn—Its later Tenants—The “Strand Hotel Company”—The Globe Theatre.

WE now come to Holywell Street, so called from the holy well which was there, according to Fitzstephen, who carefully separates it from St. Clement’s Well. In Stow’s time it had fallen into disrepair, for he says: “Holywell is much decayed and marred with filthiness purposely laid there, for the heightening of the ground for garden plots.” Its site is believed to have been at the back of No. 24 in the street, the “Dog” Tavern, which is thus described in the *Daily Telegraph* in “Things I have seen,” by G. A. Sala. “The ‘Dog’ in Holywell Street was a beetle-browed, three-storeyed structure with three bay windows on the first and second floor, and an overhanging superstructure. It was entered by a steep flight of steps; and, if you were privileged to enjoy the acquaintance of the landlady of the establishment—Mr. Dormer’s predecessor, you might at once walk into her extremely comfortable although somewhat dark bar parlour; there she used to sit in a big armchair, surrounded by heavy old furniture and dingy old prints in heavy frames, chatting with her gossips, and generally beaming around in a manner most cheerful to behold. Mr. Dormer, who owned ‘Old Betty’s Chop House’ close by, took over the old ‘Dog’ about 1851. He laid out £200 in excavating the choked-up well, *at the back* of his premises, not *under*, as Timbs says, in the belief

The "Holywell"

that it was identical (a belief in which Mr. Timbs and Mr. Walford agree) with the original Holy Well, after which the narrow tortuous street is named. But his



OLD HOUSES, HOLYWELL STREET—1853.

efforts met with but scanty reward, the most interesting find being a scrap of paper, seemingly torn out of a memorandum book, and containing in faded ink the words, 'Dr. Goldsmith, 13s. 10d.' Was this, asks Mr.

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Sala, an unpaid bill of Goldies? There was also found a fragment of a shattered punch bowl, with a William and Mary guinea mounted in a part of the base. Was this the punch bowl to which the silver ladle appertained that had been stolen from a tavern in a case tried by Lord Mansfield? The counsel for the prosecution was very severe upon the prisoner, who, he was informed, had been an attorney. His lordship, in a half whisper, interrupted the counsel, begging him not to misrepresent matters; 'for,' said his lordship, 'if the fellow had been an attorney, he would never have been content with the ladle, but would have taken the bowl also.'

Holywell Street was a wretched narrow lane, picturesque in the middle of last century, because nothing had been done to it. It was insanitary physically as well as morally; at one time, with regard to the latter, it was a sink of iniquity; indecent literature and prints were always to be got there, and it took many police prosecutions to purify it. There was other literature to be obtained there, some very good and respectable second-hand book shops being in the street; and when the moral atmosphere of the place had been somewhat disinfected and cleansed, more of the same trade came, and an attempt was made to change the name of the street into "Booksellers Row," but the foul odour of Holywell Street still clung around it. There used also to be the shops of second-hand clothes dealers, where once, according to Strype, dwelt "divers salesmen, piece brokers, and stay makers," some of whose signs, such as the Indian Queen and the Half Moon, were in existence until a comparatively recent date. In fact, no illustration of Old Holywell Street would be complete without a representation of the Half Moon. This was once the sign of a corset maker, who worked for the royal family of George III. Mr. Norman, in *London Signs and*

Holywell Street

Inscriptions, says that on the testimony of engraved shop bills we learn that Holywell Street was noted for



HOLYWELL STREET—1862.

silk mercers, and its bodice or stay makers, the Indian Queen, the Golden Key, and the Bodice, or Body, *i.e.* a pair of stays being common signs.

Old Time Aldwych

Mr. Diprose says : " Half Moon Passage, nearly opposite Surrey Street, leads into Holywell Street. The Half Moon, which is suspended over a tobacconist's shop (1868) at the corner of the passage in this street, was formerly the sign of a tradesman who was staymaker to George III. This passage was originally part of a great thoroughfare ; for, in olden days, it continued across Holywell Street and, skirting New Inn, terminated at Great Wild Street. Many years ago a house situated on the north side of Holywell Street, near this passage, was in the occupation of a diamond merchant. A thief walked into the shop one day, requesting to be shown some diamonds, and, whilst apparently examining them, he suddenly threw a handful of snuff into the face and eyes of the merchant, and was enabled to get clear off with a large number. The present occupier of these premises tells us that he has the deeds relating to this house in his possession, dated as far back as Queen Mary." In a footnote to page 181 he says : " On the south side of Holywell Street, at the north-west corner of the passage leading into the Strand, and forming one of a row of the picturesque houses of old London, is one which for many years has been the observed of all passers-by, by reason of the curious gilt sign of the half moon suspended over the door. When the house changed hands some time since, a friend of ours was offered this interesting relic for a few shillings ; but rather than see the thoroughfare lose one of its curiosities, our friend begged that it might be retained in its old position, and we are pleased to chronicle that the favour was granted him." This illustration, taken in 1847, gives a good view of this old sign, and also of a carved lion's head as corbel to a house on the other side of the passage.

Opposite to this passage, which served as an entrance

Lyon's Inn

to the Inn, and on the north side of Holywell Street, was the oldest portion of Lyon's Inn; and here was the original entrance, blocked up many years ago, which was adorned by a pair of boldly sculptured lions' heads. The other entrance in Newcastle Street rendered the Inn a thoroughfare; but after blocking up that in Holywell Street, that in Newcastle Street remained the only gate to the Inn. Timbs gives the best history of this little Inn of Chancery that I know of. He says: "The history



THE "HALF MOON," HOLYWELL STREET—1847.

of the Inn is briefly told. Sir George Buc, in Howes' ed. 1631, says: 'Lyon's Inn was a guest Inn, or hostelry, held at the sign of the Lyon, and purchased by gentlemen, professors, and students in the law, in the reign of King Henry the Eighth, and converted to an Inn of Chancery.' Hatton describes the Inn, nearly 80 years afterwards, as follows: 'Lyon's Inn, an Inn of Chancery, situate on the S.h. side of Witch Street. It has been such an Inn since Anno 1420, or sooner. It is

Old Time Aldwych

governed by a Treasurer and 12 Ancients; those of this House are 3 weeks in Michaelmas Term, other Terms 2 in Commons, and pay 5s. for the Reading weeks, for others 2s. 6d. Here are Mootings once in four Terms, and they sell their Chambers for 1 or 2 Lives. Their Armorial Ensigns are Chequy Or and Azure, a Lyon rampant, Sable. They have a handsome Hall, built in the year 1700' " (*New View of London*, 1708).

Herbert, in his *Antiquities of the Inns of Court and Chancery*, the materials of which he mostly derived from Dugdale's *Origines Juridiciales*, says: "It (Lyon's Inn) is known to be a place of considerable antiquity from the old books of the stewards' accounts, which contain entries made in the time of King Henry V. How long before that period it was an Inn of Chancery is uncertain."

The Inn was a nursery of lawyers; and one of the most interesting records of its history is, that here was nurtured the incorruptible Sir Edward Coke, the founder of the independence of the Bench of England, and to whom his intriguing rival, Sir Francis Bacon, ascribed the praise of having preserved the vessel of the common law in a steady and consistent cause. Some time in the year after Coke's call to the Bar, *i.e.* in 1579, he having greatly distinguished himself in the *Mootings and Readings*, which constituted a necessary part of the education of an advocate in former times, the Society of the Inner Temple appointed him Reader at Lyon's Inn; when the intelligence and learning displayed by him in the exercises raised for him a high reputation as a lawyer, and opened the way to that extensive practice at the Bar which he acquired with a rapidity almost without parallel in the history of the profession. Lloyd, in his *State Worthies*, says that "his learned lecture so

Lyon's Inn

spread forth his fame, that crowds of clients came to him for counsel." In the next term after he was called to the Bar he argued a case of much nicety and importance, known to lawyers by the name of Lord Cromwell's case, in which he says, in his own report of it, was the first cause that he moved in the King's Bench. Thenceforth, until he became Solicitor-General, his practice was enormous. In 1592 he became Recorder of the Inner Temple. It is curious to trace the start of our great constitutional lawyer from his Readership at Lyon's Inn, and to picture the crowds of students who, in the days of Elizabeth, flocked to the old Hall of the Inn, the hostelry of Lancastrian times. We get an indication of the Inn buildings in 1543 (some years before Coke's time) from Van der Wyngrede's View of London, in the Sutherland Collection in the Bodleian: beyond the Strand all is open ground.

On entering the Inn from Newcastle Street, on the right, in the south-west corner of the court, was the Hall, built in 1700,—a substantial brick edifice, with a small lantern on the roof; the east end had a stone-framed pediment, and the armorial lion sculptured in the tympanum; beneath was a handsome doorway of stone, with Doric columns, and under the windows were festoons of flowers carved in stone. This entrance, with a flight of steps, is shown in prints of 1800 and 1804; but it had long been blocked up. The Hall was a large unadorned room; adjoining was the "parliament chamber"; and beneath the entire building was a kitchen of cryptal spaciousness, with other offices. The kitchen had not been used for many years. Upon the last occasion the clothes of the cook caught fire while she was attending to her viands. The flames overpowered her, unaided as she was, and the poor creature is said to have been burned to a cinder.

Old Time Aldwych

We remember a few roughly painted portraits of legal worthies upon the walls of the Hall. It had been, for many years, let for law lectures, and for meetings of architectural and other artistic societies.

The oldest portion of the Inn was the south side, fronting Holywell Street, a portion of which had four storeys and bay windows; the upper chambers were of very low pitch, and access to them was by two spiral



LYON'S INN—1800.

(See page 237.)

flights, reminding one of the corkscrew staircase, oddly said to have been invented before the use of fermented liquors was rightly understood.

The northern and eastern sides of the square were of red brick, with two inscription stones, the oldest of which bore the date of 1683. Small as was the court, it had, within memory, a few trees, and that almost invariable adjunct to an Inn of Court or Chancery—a sundial; this, however, so long ago as

Lyon's Inn

1828, had lost its gnomon and figures, and was falling to pieces. Upon a gusty day in autumn, curious it was to watch the little hurricane as the wind swept into corners and up open staircases the withered leaves, the rustle of which broke the silence of this strange old place.

We are not aware of the period at which the law tenants left the Inn, and the little that is remembered of its subsequent occupiers is of comparatively modern date; nevertheless, these records tell of a few noteworthy persons and circumstances. In the old chambers a laborious student of Jeremy Bentham, through days and nights and months and years of hard reading, stored up information to qualify himself for the arduous duties of the Poor Law Commission: indeed, here the primal measures of the new law may be said to have been framed; and never did public servant or confidential services merit higher recognition than their author. Thence he became a hard worker in the wide field of sanitary science.

Next door, in second floor chambers, which from their low pitch and small windows resembled the cabin of a ship, there dwelt a ripe classic scholar, who, by way of relief, wrote in the *Weekly Dispatch* newspaper the spirited leaders signed "D," which became a sort of mint mark in that journal. He was succeeded in the tenancy by a hard working author, one of whose toilsome feats was to have made an index of 2000 references in one single night by the aid of potations of strong green tea!

"The next noteworthiness is of considerably less enviable notoriety. In chambers of the south-east corner of the Inn lived the gambler, William Weare, who was murdered by Thurtell at Elstree, in Hertfordshire (24th October 1823), as commem-

Old Time Aldwych

orated in a ballad of the time attributed to Theodore Hook :

They cut his throat from ear to ear,
His brains they battered in ;
His name was Mr. William Weare
He dwelt in Lyon's Inn.

"Next door, in the attics, through toilsome days and nights, was annually collected the *Post Office Directory*; and from these labours may be dated the progressive completeness of the *Directory*, which has agglomerated into the very bulky volume that comes in with the Christmas turkeys, and has almost outgrown the Post Office itself.

"In the double set of chambers beneath lived Philip Absolon, the antiquary and genealogist, who greatly assisted E. W. Brayley in his best work, *The History of Westminster Abbey*. Absolon had his rooms filled with a valuable library, and almost endless stores of prints and drawings and articles of *virtù*; he was, moreover, an amateur heraldic painter, and filled his windows with armorial glass of his own handiwork. He set a high value upon heraldry, but rated lowly Egyptian antiquities! When Salt's celebrated collection was about to be sold, Absolon received a catalogue, which he threw aside with disdain; the vain old heraldic painter declaring the worthlessness of Egyptian antiquities as "stuff," prefixing a profane superlative which we had rather not repeat.

"Next door, northward, lived Captain Holland, the *litterateur*, during his editorship of the *Monthly Magazine*, in which were printed the earliest of Charles Dickens' 'Sketches by Boz.' One of these papers Holland had consigned to the 'rejected' basket, from which limbo it was rescued by a dropper-in, whose attention was drawn to the somewhat mystical handwriting.

“Strand Hotel Company”

He drew up the paper, which proved to be ‘The Bloomsbury Christening,’ one of the raciest of the author’s early sketches, and familiar to playgoers. Holland wrote some sound volumes for Lardner’s *Cyclopædia*. In the chambers above resided a well-read man of the law, who has since distinguished himself as a topographer of the very interesting parish of Lambeth.

“Such are the associations, legal, literary, and artistic, of old Lyon’s Inn. A few navy agents lingered here to the last, as did some of the officers of the now defunct Insolvent Debtors’ Court, which in no way relieved the seediness of the place. One of the messengers was a stalwart man, who in his long service must have almost walked round the world, scattering notices—in most cases unnoticed—or consummations of bad debts which might have been left to their natural oblivion. A few of the oldest inhabitants of this mouldy Inn had almost grown to the spot, so wedded do men become by habit and circumstance to loopholes of retreat from the din and roar of the great Babel by which they are surrounded. An aged man of the law was heard to say that he was born there, and there he should wish to die; and his neighbour in the garret took such delight in his window gardens, that he sighed not for bowers or fields, though they had been Elysian. Here he lived to a great age, at a rent of fewer pounds than months in the year; and he left with a pang the seedy old place where he had dwelt so long ‘in measureless content.’ He was the last to quit old Lyon’s Inn.”

When it had arrived at this dilapidated condition it attracted the attention of The Strand Hotel Company (capital, £100,000), who took a lease of the ground for 99 years, with power to purchase the freehold, and on 2nd December 1862 and two following days there was sold, in 284 lots, the furniture, fittings, and building materials

Old Time Aldwych

of the hall of Nos. 2 to 8 Lyon's Inn, and two houses in Holywell Street, being the first clearance sale. The carved stone lion and the dated shield (1700) on the hall front were included in lots 204 and 205.

This mammoth hotel company also purchased the Old "Dog" Tavern, which was sold on 22nd March 1864; but the company, which intended to erect a whole region of houses, offices, and squares, so built as to economise the space occupied, came to grief, and were obliged to suspend their operations, or rather to go into liquidation, leaving their scheme in a very inchoate condition; but then, as now, it was considered that the crying want of London was more theatres, and accordingly the Globe Theatre was built upon a portion of the site of Lyon's Inn. This theatre was opened on Saturday, 28th November 1868. It bore the name once borne by the summer theatre of which Shakspeare was part proprietor, and which Ben Jonson, referring to its situation, called "The Globe, the glory of the Bank." The proprietor was Mr. Sefton Parry, who thoroughly understood the needs of a theatre, and he made a very comfortable little place of this, which afforded accommodation for about 1500 people. Its construction was peculiar; for, taking advantage of the deep foundations of the premises which were in the course of construction by the defunct Strand Hotel Company, he made the pit and stage underground, the dress circle and boxes being even with the entrance in Newcastle Street; but the pit had to be gained by descending a steep flight of stairs at another entrance in Wych Street, which also gave admission to the gallery and the royal box. The interior of the theatre was in the form of a segment of a circle, an arrangement which afforded a good view of the stage to all beholders. The roof was domed, and, as it was before the age of electricity, the theatre was lit by a

Globe Theatre

large sun burner in the centre, which also acted as a ventilator. There was nothing gorgeous in the decoration, but it was a pretty little theatre. I think the only *contretemps* at the opening was that the drop scene intended for the Globe had been destroyed by fire at the



OLD HOUSES BETWEEN HOLYWELL STREET AND WYCH STREET—1855.

(See next page.)

atelier of its painters, Messrs. Grieve and Telbin, but by the kindness of Mr. Buckstone, who lent another, everything went very well, even to the new play with which it started, called *Cyril's Success*, by H. J. Byron.

In the course of time its fate of demolition duly

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came, and it had to come down because it was in the way of the devouring Aldwych; and all its internal economy was sold in May 1903. It was an extremely successful little theatre, and there was scarcely a modern writer of eminence who had not had his plays performed at the Globe. How long did *Les Cloches de Corneville* attract crowded and delighted audiences? Here it was, too, in Farmer's burlesque of *Blue Beard*, that Mr. Willie Edouin made London roar with laughter with his impersonation of "the Heathen Chinees"; and who can remember without a smile *The Private Secretary* and *Charley's Aunt*? Yet again, another success was achieved there of a totally different kind, with nothing in it to arouse the risible faculties, the rendering of Dickens' "Jo" by Miss Jennie Lee.

Returning down Holywell Street to St. Clements Church, we should have found, fifty years ago, two old houses facing the church, between Holywell and Wych Streets, one of which was a second-hand clothiers, and the other a public-house which was formerly the "Crooked Billet," and afterwards the "Rising Sun." According to a pencil note attached to the water-colour drawing by Shepherd, they were taken down in 1855.

CHAPTER XVIII

The "Angel" Inn—Wych Street—The "Shakspeare's Head" and Mark Lemon—Jack Sheppard—New Inn—The "Opera Comique"—Newcastle Street—Drury House—The Drurys—Afterwards Craven House—The Queen of Bohemia—Lord Craven—His Picture—Craven Buildings.

AT the commencement of Wych Street, on the north side, was a very old inn, all gables and galleries, occupying a large extent of ground, known by the name of the "Angel." It was to this house, in January 1555, that Bishop Hooper, after his condemnation to be burned alive, was taken, previous to his martyrdom. This Inn was an extremely fashionable resort when Clare Market and its neighbourhood was a fashionable centre for the Templars, and later for the naval officers which the coach brought from Portsmouth. On 11th November 1733 one Mr. Simon Oland, for the capture of whose assailant a hundred pounds reward was offered, was killed at the "Angel," evidently in a duel, by William Sellick, junior, Attorney at Law. In the *Public Advertiser*, 28th March 1769, appears the following advertisement: "To be sold, a Black Girl, the property of J. B——, eleven years of age, who is extremely handy, works at her needle tolerably, and speaks English perfectly well; is of an excellent temper and willing disposition. Inquire of Mr. Owen, at the Angel Inn, behind St. Clement's Church in the Strand." There is also another advertisement in the *Daily Advertiser*, 15th July 1742: "To be sold, at the Angel Inn, the back Side of St. Clement's. A very good Chaise-Marine, with the Convenience of carrying

Old Time Aldwych

two Servants in the fore Part, and the other Part to carry Plate, Linnen, etc. Also a very good Saddle Horse to be sold, very sound ; and worth the Money." It was a great coaching house, and is mentioned in *Taylor's Taverns*, 1636 ; and in his *Carrier's Cosmographie*, 1637, it is stated that the Aylesbury carriers lodged there. There is a token of this house, dated 1657, in the Beaufof Collection at the Guildhall. Up to the time of its demolition seven or eight stage coaches started from this Inn, but in 1853 the property was purchased by a builder, and St. Clement's Chambers were erected on the site.

Wych Street was the most picturesque street in London, and for its size had the largest number of old houses. Walking up from St. Clements, the first noteworthy house was the "Shakspeare's Head," with a plaster bust of the poet placed over the door. It had been a somewhat disreputable public-house, under the management of a female who enjoyed the "protection" of "Dutch Sam" the younger ; and when she quitted the premises no less a man than Mr. Mark Lemon, afterwards editor of *Punch*, became her successor. Mr. Spielmann, in his *History of Punch*, tells us that "The "Shakspeare's Head" in Wych Street had previously been Lemon's place of business. It was the meeting place of the little "quoting, quipping, quaffing" club of fellow-workers in Bohemia ;¹ and Lemon, it was explained, had dabbled both in verse and in the lighter drama, efforts which were "not half bad." Little did the writer dream that his modest muse had marked him out for the editorship of the greatest comic journal the world has seen ! To the duties of tavern-keeper, Lemon, who was enamoured of literature and the drama, had been condemned by a fate more than usually unkind.

¹ Called "the Owls," because of the late hours they kept.



THE "ANGEL" HOTEL, ST. CLEMENT DANES—1854.

PUBLIC
WINDSWORTH
LIBRARY

Mark Lemon

He had found himself nearly penniless when Mr. Very, his stepfather, offered him a clerical position in his brewery in Kentish Town. But the brewery failed, and with it Lemon's livelihood, and he was only rescued by a jovial tavern-keeper named Roper, one of his stepfather's customers, and by him put into charge — disastrously for both — of the Wych Street public-house."

The Rev. John Richardson, in his *Recollections of the last Half Century*, gives a vivid description of the company assembled there: "He had, about the time alluded to, taken unto himself a wife, a very pleasing young person, and a sister of Miss Romer, the popular vocalist. Mr. Mark. Lemon took upon himself the mysteries of a Boniface, and his wife assisted in the duties of the establishment. On the first floor was a room extending the whole length and breadth of the premises, in which the company assembled. It was here that the notables were accustomed to celebrate the orgies of a tavern life; and it was in this room that the original concoction of the admirable periodical just mentioned was attempted. The *litterati*, *savans*, etc., who here assembled were of a different sort from those whose complexions are said to exhibit the paleness which the midnight lamp produces. They were a jolly crew, deriving their inspiration more from the gifts of Bacchus than the grace of Apollo. They seemed aware of the fact; their oblations were confined to the shrine of the rosy god, in whose worship they were sincere and exclusive. The conversation of these persons betrayed nothing to induce a casual auditor to suppose he was in the presence of 'men of letters.' On the contrary, literary discussion was altogether excluded. The conversation was enlivened by the species of wit called 'chaffing,' in which the object of the speakers is to delude,

Old Time Aldwych

expose, or ridicule each other. This exercise of the mental led sometimes to the exercise of the physical powers, or, rather, to threats of their employment. The good humour of the majority, and the delegated authority of the gentleman who presided, kept order in the proceedings, and prevented the scandal which would have attached to a conflict with anything but words amongst the instructors of the people. Fortunately for himself and for the public, Mr. Mark Lemon retired from an occupation which was beneath his talents at the end of the first year of his novitiate, and found employment in things more congenial with his tastes. The 'plant' passed into the hands of somebody else, and the frequenters of the place found other haunts for the cultivation of their peculiarities."

In a scathing piece of personal abuse, called *A Word with Punch* (professedly written by Alfred Bunn, but which is credited to G. A. Sala), Mark Lemon is pictorially caricatured as "the Literary Pot-Boy," and in the midst of a torrent of libellous language is the following:—

"LAY OF THE LITERARY POT-BOY.

"In the days" when I aided
That 'porter' to sell,
In which I then traded,
And drank off as well:
My 'punch' was much primer
Than any on town,
But since I've turned rhymers,
They all cry it down!
My 'spirits' were purest
That ever tap graced,
And therefore were surest
To tickle the taste:
But it's certainly true, now,
You'll find since my fall,
In whate'er I do, now,
No *spirit* at all!!!"

Wych Street

Wych Street and its neighbourhood is reminiscent of the notorious burglar Jack Sheppard, for we find it



OLD HOUSES, WYCH STREET—1844.

recorded in *Authentic Memoirs of the Life and surprising Adventures of John Sheppard*, published in 1724, the

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year of his execution, that "his Mother (although an Honest, Industrious Woman) was not capable of advancing any Money for him, and therefore apply'd herself to Mr. *William Kneebone*, at the Angel, over against the New Church in the Strand, Woollen Draper, to whom she was servant." Kneebone, whose benevolence he requited, at a later date, by robbery, taught him to write and cipher, and got him apprenticed to Owen Wood, a carpenter, living in Wych Street. At the Black Lion in Drury Lane, hard by, Sheppard fell into bad company, making the acquaintance of a loose woman, Bess Lyon, or "Edgeworth Bess," who with another girl, known as Poll Maggot, incited him to most of his crimes. This is not the place for his history, but he could not leave the neighbourhood, and even on the day of his final apprehension, he treated his mother to three quarters of brandy at the Sheers Tavern, in Maypole Alley, near Clare Market, and then drank himself silly, in which state he was captured, and taken back to Newgate.

Leading out of the north side of Wych Street was another Inn of Chancery, called New Inn, which was transported from St. George's Lane, between the Old Bailey and the Fleet River, as Strype tells us: "In this *St. George's Lane*, on the North side thereof, remaineth yet an old Wall of Stone, inclosing a piece of ground, up *Seacoal Lane*, wherein (by report) sometime stood an Inn of Chancery. Which House, being greatly decayed, and standing remote from other Houses of that Profession, the Company removed to a common Hostelry, called of the Sign, *our Lady Inn*, not far from *Clement's Inn*, which they procured from Sir *John Fincux*, Lord Chief Justice of the *King's Bench*. And since have held it of the Owners, by the name of the *New Inn*, paying therefor Six Pounds Rent by the Year, as Tenants at their own

New Inn

Will. For more (as is said) cannot be gotten of them ; and much less will they be put from it." And in another place he says : " Wich Street begins at the *Angel Inn*, and so runs into *Drury Lane* ; it is a street much taken up by Upholsters, for the Sale of Bedding and Second Hand Household Goods. In this street is *New Inn*, another of the Inns of Chancery, and here the Students of *Strand Inn* settled, when that House was pulled down in the Reign of *Edward the Sixth*, for the building of *Somerset House*. This Inn is, of late, much increased by the new



NEW INN—1804.

buildings in the Garden Part ; which is severed in (*sic*) with Pallisadoes, and neatly kept with Grass Plats and walks, set with Rows of Trees, so that the Chambers (which all front the Garden) are very pleasant and airy. Thro' this Inn there is a passage into Houghton Street, and another into *St. Clement's Inn*. Near unto *New Inn* is *Wickham Court*, and *Wich Alley*, both very small ; and, on the north side next to *Lyon's Inn*, is *Ogden Court*, also but ordinary."

The armorial bearings of the Society of New Inn

Old Time Aldwych

are a bunch of lilies in a pot, the flowers argent, the field vert. This being the flower emblematical of the purity of the Virgin Mary, was naturally adopted by "Our Lady Inn." Sir Thomas More was a student here, in the reign of Henry VII., before he entered as a Fellow of Lincoln's Inn. A "mootyng bout" took place at this Inn at the end of the eighteenth century, and such gesticulation and passion was shown by one of the gentlemen disputants, that the passers by who heard and



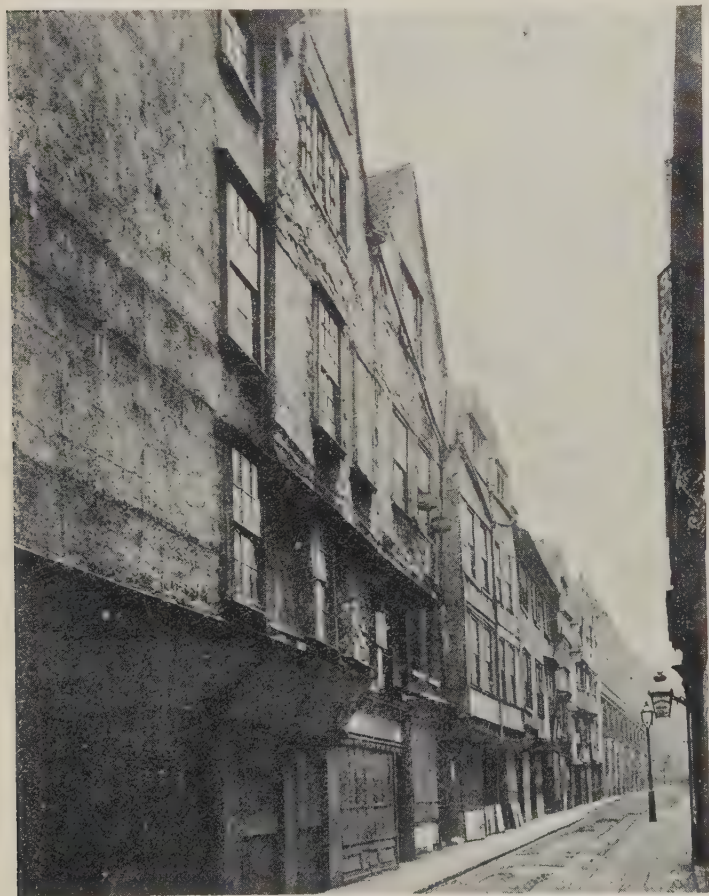
NEW INN HALL—1855.

saw him, thought that he was beside himself. This "mootyng" means arguing points of law before the Benchers, and was done by men who had been five or six years in the House. These wranglers were called Utter Barristers, no doubt meaning Outer, because not yet belonging to any one of the four Superior Inns of Court.

Nearly opposite to the Wych Street entrance to New Inn, and adjoining the Globe Theatre, was the Opera

Opera Comique

Comique, which was also erected on a portion of the site of Lyon's Inn. It was built from the designs of Mr. G. F. Fowler, and was opened on 29th October 1870.



OLD HOUSES, WYCH STREET—1867.

The principal entrance to it was in the Strand, but it was merely the entrance, for there was a long and tortuous tunnel under Holywell Street to be traversed before you were in the theatre, which, like the Globe, was

Old Time Aldwych

very much underground, a long flight of stairs in Wych Street leading down to the stage level. When opened, it was very elegantly decorated, being intended for a



OLD HOUSES, WYCH STREET, NORTH FRONT—1853.

high class of audience, as it was proposed to play nothing but French plays. There were two special features about this theatre, first the extent to which paintings,

Drury House

chiefly allegorical subjects, were used in the decorations ; and, second, that there was no pit, the place usually assigned it being occupied by stalls. The company, who were formerly at the Théâtre Déjazet, had been secured, and the pieces chosen belonged to the *répertoire* of that house. Those played on the opening night were *Les Prés Saint Gervais*, a two-act vaudeville by M. Victorien Sardou, and another, in one act, by MM. Chivot and Duru, called *Les Forfaits de Pipermans*.

Newcastle Street is comparatively modern, and was named after John Holles, Duke of Newcastle (1711). It used to be a narrow alley leading down to the Strand Maypole, and was called Maypole Alley. Close by the Olympic Theatre there was still a Maypole Alley, until destroyed for Aldwych ; and there was that house, shown in Agas' map, at the bottom of Drury Lane, then called Drury House. This is universally credited as being built by the famous Sir William Drury, Marshal of Berwick, and Lord Justice to the Council of Ireland, who died in 1579. But this is a question, and one made harder by the historical muddles made about him. Take, for instance, Thornbury and Walford's *Old and New London*, vol. iii. p. 36 : "Drury House, from which the lane originally took its name, stood at the West end of Wych Street. It was built by Sir William Drury, who is reported to have been not only the head of a great family, but Knight of the Garter. He held a command in the Irish wars in the reign of Elizabeth, and showed great ability as an officer. He unfortunately fell in a duel with a Sir John Burroughes, about a foolish quarrel for precedency." Now, the Sir William Drury who was Marshal of Berwick, died at Waterford, in Ireland, of over-fatigue, and was buried at the charges of Queen Elizabeth in Christ Church Cathedral, 3rd October 1579. But the Sir William Drury who

Old Time Aldwych

fell in a duel lost his life whilst serving under Lord Willoughby, in France; his body was brought to England, and deposited in the vault in Hawsted Church, Suffolk, where there is a tablet to his memory.

A writer in *Notes and Queries* authoritatively states that neither of these built Drury Place, "for it was erected generations previously by a Sir Roger Drury, who died in 1495." It may well be so, for, if we look in Agas' Map, where it shows as being the only house in the Lane, the thoroughfare is called "Drury Lane," as if that was its name by right, and not "Via de Aldwych." It seems to imply that the house had been built so long at that time that the old name was gone for good. Strype does not say who built it; and Pennant, who is answerable for the *Old and New London* muddle, only says, "and, *I believe*, built by Sir William Drury." All Strype says of it is, "*Drury Lane*, so called from *Drury House*, now the seat of the Earl of *Craven*, which, with the additions built by his lordship, called *Craven House*, makes together a very large house, or which may be termed several Houses. The Entrance into this House is thro' a Pair of Gates which leadeth into a large Yard for the reception of Coaches."

A better and more succinct account of Craven House in connection with the Queen of Bohemia and Lord Craven cannot be found than that in Timbs' *Romance of London*: "William, Lord Craven, the hero of Creutznach, by his romantic attachment to Elizabeth, the titular Queen of Bohemia, has inseparably associated their names in history. According to the old Yorkshire tradition, Craven's father, Lord Mayor in 1611, was born of such poor parents that they sent him when a boy by a common carrier to London, where he became a mercer in Leadenhall Street and grew rich. His son, the soldier of fortune, distinguished himself under Gustavus

Queen of Bohemia

Adolphus; and, at the storming of Creutznach, in 1632, his determined bravery led to the fortress being taken after two hours' conflict, in which all the English officers were wounded. Craven then attached himself to the King and Queen of Bohemia. She was the daughter of James I., and, with the reluctant consent of her parents (particularly of her mother, who used to twit her with the title of 'Goody Palsgrave'), was married to Frederick the Elector Palatine, for whom the Protestant interest in Germany erected Bohemia into a kingdom, in the vain hope, with the assistance of his father-in-law, of competing with the Catholic emperor. Frederick lost everything, and his widow became a dependant on the bounty of Craven, who had fought in her husband's cause, and helped to bring up her children. It is through her that the family of Brunswick succeeded to the throne of this kingdom, as the next Protestant heirs of James I. James's daughter, being a woman of lively manners, a Queen, and a Protestant leader, excited great interest in her time, and received more than the usual portion of flattery from the romantic. Donne wrote an Epithalamium on her marriage beginning,

'Here lies a she sun, and a he moon there.'

Sir Henry Wotton had permission to call her his 'Royal Mistress,' which he was as proud of as if he had been a knight of old. And when she lost her Bohemian kingdom, it was said that she retained a better one, for that she was still the 'Queen of Hearts.' Sir Henry wrote upon her his elegant verses beginning,

'You meaner beauties of the night,'

in which he calls her

'Th' eclipse and glory of her kind.'

Her courage and presence of mind were so conspicuous, and her figure and manners so attractive, though not

Old Time Aldwych

to be called a consummate beauty, that in her Royal husband's time 'half the army were in love with her.'

"In 1664 Charles II. conferred upon her heroic admirer the titles of Viscount Craven and Earl Craven; and, on the death of Monk, gave him the colonelcy of the Coldstream Regiment of Footguards. His lordship resided in Drury House, which he rebuilt; it was then called Craven House. Earl Craven is said to have been privately married to the widowed Queen of Bohemia (he was her junior by twelve years); 'and thus,' remarks Dr. Whitaker, 'the son of a Wharfedale peasant matched with a sister of Charles II.'¹

"In Craven House, the romantic Queen would appear, from some accounts, to have resided; but the truth is, she lived in the adjoining house, probably built for her by Lord Craven, and called for many years afterwards Bohemia House, and was finally converted into a public-house, which bore her head for its sign. There is said to have been a subterranean communication between the two houses, the sites of which and grounds are now occupied by Craven Buildings and the Olympic Theatre.

"The Queen quitted Bohemia House for Leicester House, afterwards Norfolk House, in the Strand, where she died in February 1662. Whether Lord Craven attended her at this period does not appear; but she left him her books, pictures, and papers. Sometimes he accompanied her to the play; he built the fine house of Hampstead Marshall, on the banks of the river Kennet, in Berkshire, as a sort of asylum for his injured Princess: it cost, although not finished, £60,000, and was destroyed by fire in 1718.

"Lord Craven long resided in Craven House; he was famed for his bustling activity; whenever there was a fire in London, Lord Craven was sure to be

¹ This assertion is open to very grave suspicion.

Lord Craven

seen riding about to give orders to the soldiers, who were, at such disasters, called out to preserve order; and his horse is said to have 'smelt a fire as soon as it happened.' Pepys describes Craven as riding up and down 'like a madman,' giving orders to the soldiery; and Lord Dorset sings of 'Lord Craven's drums' beating day and night. When, in his old age, there was a talk of giving his regiment to somebody else, Craven said, that 'if they took away his regiment, they had as good take away his life, since he had nothing else to divert himself with.' The next King, William III., gave it to General Talmash; yet the old lord is said to have gone on busy to the last. He died in 1697, aged nearly 89 years. He was intimate with Evelyn, Ray, and other naturalists, and delighted in gardening. The garden of Craven House ran in the direction of the present Drury Lane; so that where there is now a bustle of a very different sort we may fancy the old soldier busying himself with his flower beds, and John Evelyn discoursing on the blessings of peace and privacy.

"Craven and Monk, Duke of Albemarle, heroically stayed in town during the dreadful pestilence; and, at the hazard of their lives, preserved order. For their noble services, two or three great silver flagons were made, as gifts of the King. Craven continued to reside at Craven House throughout the whole time of the plague in 1665-66. He first hired and then purchased a field on which pest houses (said to be 36 in number) were built by him for persons afflicted with that disease, and in which a common burial ground was made for thousands who died of it. In 1687 the Earl gave this field and its houses in trust for the poor of St. Clement Danes, St. Martin-in-the-fields, St. James, Westminster, and St. Paul's, Covent Garden,

Old Time Aldwych

to be used only in case of the plague reappearing; and the place came to be known as the Earl of Craven's Pest field, the Pest field, the Pesthouse field, or Craven field. In 1734 the surrounding district having been

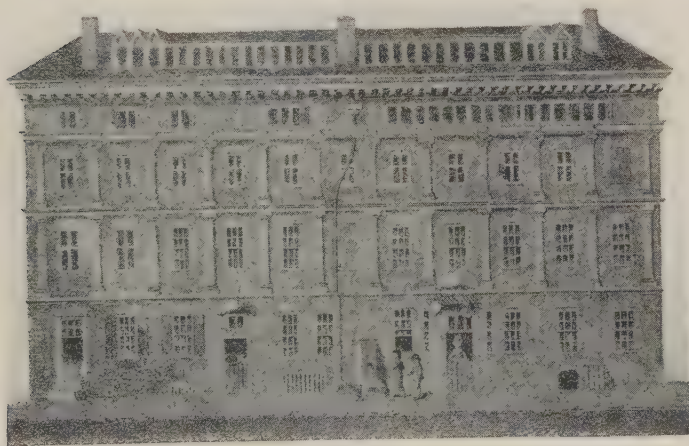


EQUESTRIAN PORTRAIT OF EARL OF CRAVEN—1701.

covered with houses and streets, a private Act (7 Geo. II. c. 11) discharged this pesthouse field from its charitable trusts, transferring them without alteration to other lands and messuages at and near Byard's Watering Place (Bayswater), Paddington, now called Craven Hill.

Lord Craven's Picture

"A singular memorial of this heroic man existed to our time. Craven Buildings were erected in 1723, upon part of the grounds attached to Craven House. On the wall at the bottom of the buildings was, formerly, a fresco painting of the gallant Earl, who was represented in armour, and with a truncheon in his hand, and the letters W. C. This portrait was twice or thrice repainted in oil; the last time by Edwards, A.R.A., author of a *Treatise on Perspective*: the picture has



CRAVEN HOUSE, DRURY LANE—1800.

been some years obliterated.¹ The Craven Head Tavern was one of the offices of Craven House, and the adjoining stabling belonged to the mansion.

"Craven Buildings have had some remarkable tenants: Hayman, the painter, contemporary with Hogarth, lived here. The famous actress, Mrs. Bracegirdle, likewise had a house here, which was afterwards inhabited by the equally celebrated Mrs. Pritchard. In the back parlour of No. 17, Dr. Arne composed the

¹ It was plastered over before 1813.

Old Time Aldwych

music of *Comus*. Elliston had a house here during his lesseeship of the Olympic Theatre, and communicating with it; and the same house was temporarily occupied by Madame Vestris and Mr. Wm. Farren, as Olympic lessees."

The lordly Craven House shared the decline of the



PART OF CRAVEN HOUSE—1804.

neighbourhood, and in 1800, when this illustration was taken, it was let out into tenements, but still showed signs of its former grandeur. It was taken down in 1803, and on its site was built the Olympic Pavilion by Philip Astley in 1805.

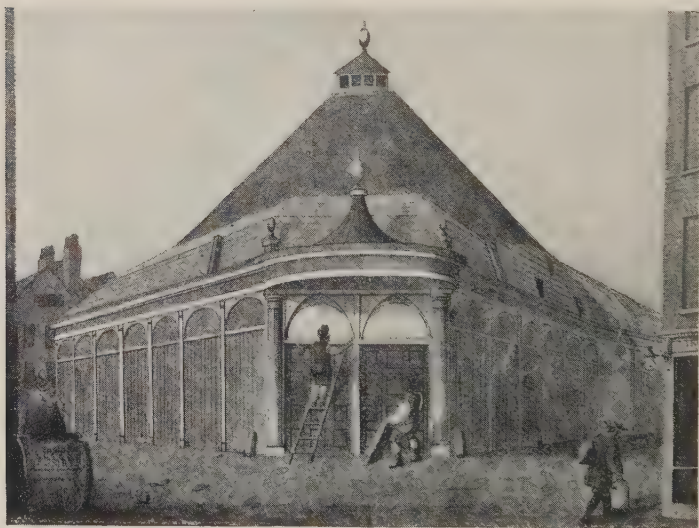
CHAPTER XIX

Philip Astley—The "Olympic Pavilion"—The "Craven Head"—Hales the Giant—The "Cock and Magpie"—Nell Gwyn—Her Dairy—Drury Lane early in Eighteenth Century—St. Martin's Burial-Ground—Dickens' "Jo"—Old Tavern in Drury Lane.

PHILIP ASTLEY was born in 1742 at Newcastle-under-Lyme, and followed his father's trade as cabinetmaker. He enlisted in a cavalry regiment about 1759, and became rough-rider and breaker-in, attaining the rank of sergeant-major. He then left the army; and General Elliott, his old commander, allowed him to keep his regimental charger. This dumb friend was the foundation of his fortunes; for, with it, he opened an exhibition of horsemanship in a field at Lambeth, and afterwards went about the country, sometimes doing horsemanship, sometimes working at his old trade. In 1770 he opened an unroofed wooden circus, with seats, in a timber yard at the foot of Westminster Bridge. In 1775 he and his wife appeared on horseback at Drury Lane, at a Shakspeare Jubilee. The Lambeth circus was enlarged, and evening performances attempted, but it was found that he had no licence for acting, and in 1783 he was sent to prison for this heinous sin, and on his release he managed to obtain a licence. His circus thrived, and was called "The Royal Grove"; but not content with this prosperity he took his performers to Dublin and Paris, and established circuses at both cities. The French Revolution stopped his Parisian venture, and his circus was utilised as barracks; and

Old Time Aldwych

in 1794 the Grove Theatre was burned down, so for a while performances were given at the old Lyceum building in the Strand. He rebuilt his theatre the same year, and in 1798 he was graciously permitted to call it "Astley's Royal Amphitheatre," but it was only to be again destroyed by fire in 1803, his loss being about £25,000. Nothing daunted, he set to work to build a new one, which was opened on



THE OLYMPIC PAVILION—1805.

Easter Monday 1804; but he ceased to have any active share in its working, leaving that to his son, and receiving a clear half of the profits. He thought a similar theatre would do on the Middlesex side of the Thames, and erected a curious structure, called the "Olympic Pavilion," in Wych Street, on the site of Craven House. The illustration shows it when nearly finished; old Astley is seated in the gig. It was principally built with the timbers of *La Ville de Paris*,

The "Craven Head"

the ship in which William IV. served as midshipman, and these materials were given to Astley, together with a chandelier, by George III. He got a lease of the ground from Lord Craven for a term of sixty-one years, at a yearly rental of £100, with the stipulation that £2500 should be expended in the erection of a theatre. Through the influence of Queen Charlotte he got a licence for "music, dancing, burlettas, pantomimes, and equestrian exhibitions." It was opened on 8th September 1806, but somehow it did not pay; and during the time that he had it he lost, it is said, £10,000. In 1812 he sold it to Elliston for £2800, and a small annuity to be paid during his life. Of this, however, he only received one payment, as he died in 1814. It was made into a regular theatre, but was burnt down, within an hour, on 29th March 1849. It was rebuilt the same year, and opened on Boxing Night. This theatre has probably been under as many different managements as most, and is now to disappear in Aldwych.

A portion of the offices of Craven House was turned into a public-house called the "Craven Head," which was numbered 91 Drury Lane, and was pulled down for the general improvements occasioned by the new street. Beyond the fact that it stood on a portion of the historic house, there was nothing remarkable about it, if we except the fact that from 1851 to 1855 the landlord was a giant, whose biography is thus recorded in the *Times* of 25th November 1863:—"Robert Hales, known as the Norfolk Giant, died at Great Yarmouth on Sunday last (22nd November). Hales was born at West Somerton, a village a few miles from Yarmouth in 1820, and was, therefore, only 43 years of age. He came of a family remarkable for their great stature, his father, a farmer, being 6 feet 6 inches in height,

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and his mother 6 feet. An ancestor of his mother was said to have been that famous warder of bluff King Hal, who stood 8 feet 4 inches in height. Of such Patagonian parents the progeny were worthy: the boys were 'sons of Anak,' averaging 6 feet 5 inches each, and the girls of Amazonian development, averaging 6 feet 3½ inches each. Robert was the flower of the family, and stood 7 feet 6 inches, weighing 432 lbs. One of his sisters, with whom he exhibited some years ago, was 7 feet 2 inches, but she died in 1842, being then only 20 years of age. Hales was stout in proportion to his height, though somewhat clumsily put together. When in his prime, he was 64 inches round the chest, 36 across the shoulders, and 21 round the calf of his leg. During his career he visited several continental capitals, and was presented to Louis Philippe while King of the French. He was introduced to the Americans under the auspices of Barnum, and 'drew' immensely, 28,000 persons having flocked to see him in ten days. On his return to this country he had the honour of being presented at Court, when Her Majesty gave him a gold watch and chain, of which he was particularly proud, and wore to the day of his death. During last summer he came to Yarmouth for the benefit of his health, which had been very much impaired by the close confinement of the caravans in which he exhibited. He seemed to rally under the genial summer weather, but, as autumn wore on, he gradually declined, and died on Sunday morning, the disease which proved fatal to him being consumption."

Opposite to the "Craven Head" was another public-house, believed to have been built in the reign of Henry VIII., called the "Cock and Magpie." As will be seen from the illustration taken from a water-colour drawing of 1850, it was very old and particularly quaint. It

Nell Gwyn

was pulled down in the early part of 1891, and was traditionally known as the dwelling-place of Nell Gwyn,



THE "COCK AND MAGPIE"—1850.

at the time when Pepys saw her in Drury Lane looking at the milkmaids dancing, but, as a matter of fact, she lived in Drury Court, a few houses off. As Mr. Timbs

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says in *The Story of Nell Gwynne*, "Nelly was now living in the fashionable part of Drury Lane, the Strand end, near the lodgings of Lacy, the actor, at the top of Maypole Alley, and over against the gate of Craven House; the alley is now Drury Court." All Drury Lane is redolent of Nelly. It is said she was born on



THE "THATCHED HOUSE," SAID TO HAVE BEEN NELL GWYN'S
DAIRY—1854.

6th February 1650, in the Coal Yard in Drury Lane (at least so says Oldys the antiquary), which was the last turning on the east side before you come to High Holborn, and which abutted on the garden wall of the White Hart Inn. We next know her as an orange girl at the King's Theatre, and afterwards as an actress in the same. She is also said to have had a dairy, afterwards the "Old Thatched House" in New Exchange Court, close by Exeter 'Change.

Drury Lane

But if a portion of Drury Lane was fashionable in the reign of Charles II., it very soon descended from its high estate, and became about the worst part of London. Steele, in the *Tatler* of 26th July 1709, gives it a nice character, and he ought to know, for he lived close by : “ There is near Covent Garden a street known by the name of Drury, which, before the days of Christianity, was purchased by the Queen of Paphos, and is the only part of Great Britain where the tenure of vassalage is still in being. All that long course of building is under particular districts or ladyships, after the manner of lordships in other parts, over which matrons of known abilities preside, and have, for the support of their age and infirmities, certain taxes paid out of the rewards of the amorous labours of the young. This seraglio of Great Britain is disposed into convenient alleys and apartments, and every house, from the cellar to the garret, inhabited by nymphs of different orders, that persons of every rank may be accommodated.”

Gay in his *Trivia* more than once descants on Drury Lane as it was in his day—a few years later :

“ O ! may thy Virtue guard thee through the Roads
Of *Drury's* mazy Courts, and dark Abodes,
The Harlot's guileful Paths, who nightly stand
Where *Katherine Street* descends into the *Strand*.
Say, vagrant Muse, their Wiles and subtil Arts,
To lure the Strangers unsuspecting Hearts ;
So shall our Youth on healthful Sinews tread,
And City Cheeks grow warm with rural Red.

'Tis She who nightly strowls with saunt'ring Pace,
No stubborn Stays her yielding Shape embrace ;
Beneath the Lamp her tawdry Ribbons glare,
The new-scover'd Manteau, and the slattern Air ;
High-draggled Petticoats her Travels show,
And hollow Cheeks with artful Blushes glow ;
With flatt'ring Sounds she soothes the cred'lous Ear,
My noble Captain ! Charmer ! Love ! my Dear !
In Riding-hood, near Tavern-Doors she plies,
Or muffled Pinders hide her livid Eyes.

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With empty Bandbox she delights to range,
And feigns a distant errand from the 'Change ;
Nay, she will oft the Quaker's Hood prophane,
And trudge demure the Rounds of Drury Lane.
She darts from Sarsnet Ambush wily Leers,
Twitches thy Sleeve, or with familiar Airs,
Her Fan will pat thy Cheek ; these Snares disdain,
Nor gaze behind thee, when she turns again."

Drury Lane is also pilloried as being the refuge of impecunious *litterateurs*. Pope, in his "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," complaining of being worried by authors to read their MSS., says :

"I sit with sad civility ; I read
With honest anguish, and an aching head :
And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,
This saving counsel, 'Keep your piece nine years.'
'Nine years !' cries he, who high in Drury Lane,
Lulled by soft zephyrs through the window pane,
Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term ends,
Obliged by hunger, and request of friends," etc.

Goldsmith so speaks of it in his "Description of an author's bed-chamber" :

"When the Red Lion staring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay ;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champagne
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury Lane ;
There in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The muse found Scroggan stretched beneath a rug ;
A window, patched with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly showed the state in which he lay," etc.

In Drury Lane were some fine old houses, a few of which I give in the accompanying illustrations, both of the same but taken from different standpoints. Drury Court is where the policeman is standing, and the opposite side of the way is Wych Street.

Drury Lane has thoroughly altered since those times, and even a person who had been away from London for twenty years would scarcely recognise it. The portion which has been the least interfered with

Drury Lane

is that from Long Acre and Great Queen Street, to High Holborn, yet even here the spirit of innovation has been abroad, and the utterly desolate burial-ground of St. Martin has been levelled, and made into a



OLD HOUSES IN DRURY LANE.

recreation ground for children of the neighbourhood. This is supposed to have been the churchyard which Dickens has immortalised in *Bleak House*, although a claim was set up in favour of a disused burial-ground

Old Time Aldwych

close by, near little Russell Street, now all razed to the ground. There is no good in contending either for or against the rival claims, for it is far more than probable



OLD HOUSES IN DRURY LANE.

that Charles Dickens idealised on his model, if indeed he had one.

“‘He was put there,’ says Jo, holding to the bars and looking in.

“Jo”

“‘Where? O, what a scene of horror!’

“‘There!’ says Jo, pointing. ‘Over yinder. Among them piles of bones, and close to that there kitchin winder! They put him very nigh the top, they was obliged to stamp upon it to git it in. I could unkiver it for you with my broom, if the gate was open. That’s why they locks it, I s’pose,’ giving it a shake. ‘It’s always locked. Look at the rat!’ cries Jo, excited. ‘Hi! look! there he goes! Ho! into the ground!’”

The servant shrinks into a corner—into a corner of



ST. MARTIN'S BURIAL-GROUND, DRURY LANE.

that hideous archway, with its deadly stains contaminating her dress; and putting out her two hands, and passionately telling him to keep away from her, for he is loathsome to her, so remains for some moments." Jo stands staring, and is still staring when she recovers herself.

“‘Is this place of abomination, consecrated ground?’

“‘I don’t know nothink of consequential ground,’ says Jo, still staring.

“‘Is it blessed?’

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“‘WHICH?’ says Jo, in the last degree amazed.

“‘Is it blessed?’

“‘I’m blest if I know,’ says Jo, staring more than ever; ‘but I shouldn’t think it warn’t. Blest?’ repeats Jo, something troubled in his mind. ‘It an’t done it much good if it is. Blest? I should think it was t’othered myself. But *I* don’t know nothink!’”

One more extract about the Churchyard and I have done:

“After a short relapse into sleep or stupor, he makes, of a sudden, a strong effort to get out of bed.

“‘Stay, Jo! what now?’

“‘It’s time for me to go to that there berryin’ ground, sir,’ he returns, with a wild look.

“‘Lie down, and tell me. What burying ground, Jo?’

“‘Where they laid him as was very good to me, very good to me indeed, he wos. It’s time for me to go down to that there berryin’ ground, sir, and ask to be put along with him. I wants to go there and be berried. He used fur to say to me, ‘I’m as poor as you to-day, Jo,’ he ses. I wants to tell him that I’m as poor as him now, and have come there to be laid along with him.’

“‘Bye and bye, Jo, bye and bye.’

“‘Ah! P’raps they wouldn’t do it, if I wos to go myself. But will you promise to have me took there, sir, and laid along with him?’

“‘I will, indeed.’

“‘Thankee, sir. Thankee, sir! They’ll have to get the key of the gate, afore they can take me in, for it’s allus locked. And there’s a step there, as I used fur to clean with my broom.—It’s turned very dark, sir. Is there any light acomin’?’”

This part of Drury Lane was full of taverns, and the following advertisement from the *Daily Advertiser* of

Drury Lane Taverns

29th June 1742 will perhaps be of interest as showing the conditions upon which a fashionable tavern was conducted in the middle of the reign of George II.:—"ELIZABETH BRETT, from Berwick Street, Soho, has lately taken, is now commodiously fitting up, and will speedily open, THE CASTLE TAVERN, in Drury Lane; to which there is also a handsome and convenient passage from Bow Street, Covent Gardens; where all Gentlemen and Ladies may have Dinners and Suppers dress'd, for within Doors, or without, as elegantly and as reasonable as at any Tavern or Eating House in Town, either for one Person, or for large Companies; and Care will be taken to have the Larders well supplied with everything fresh and seasonable, viz. all sorts of Flesh, Fowl, Fish, Pastry, &c., also the best Wines of all sorts will be sold, wholesale or retail, viz., Champagne, Burgundy, French Claret, Red and White Ports, Old Hock, Rhenish, Madeira, Lisbon, Sack, Greek Wine, &c. The Fore Room on the Ground Floor is fitted up as a COFFEE ROOM, where Gentlemen may have the above Wines, or Coffee, Tea, or Chocolate; likewise Dorchester Beer, Home brew'd Beer, Fine Ale, Gill Ale, Cyders, &c., drawn or bottled.

"Note, The Long Room in the aforesaid House will be occasionally lett, on reasonable Terms, for Auctions, Concerts, Balls, &c., to Companies of Reputation."

It is, perhaps, noteworthy that there was in 1742 a *Widow Gwynn*, who may have been a relative of Nellie's, who was a silk dyer, near this Castle Tavern, in whose house M. Lalange lodged, for whose benefit tickets might there be had for the performance of Vanbrugh's play of *The Pilgrim* at Covent Garden Theatre. Lalange was incapacitated by having "broken the great tendon of his leg."

The *Mogul* Tavern, 167 Drury Lane, probably dates from the time of Aurengzebe, the Great Mogul of Hindo-

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stan, who reigned from 1658 to 1707. It is now called the "Middlesex Music Hall."

A very old inn is the "White Hart," 191 Drury Lane, which has been there for centuries. The identity of the site of this ancient inn is pointed out in *Parton's St. Giles*, where the deed by which the Hospital of St. Giles makes an exchange of its estates to Henry VIII. is quoted as follows:—"One messuage called the 'Whyte Hart,' and eighteen acres of pasture to the same messuage belonging."¹ The Great Plague of London, which broke out in Drury Lane, was first discovered by the serving-man of the "White Hart," who noticed that the faces of two Frenchmen who had just arrived with some goods from Holland, and who had repaired to the "White Hart" for a dose of brandy, were so distorted as to cause the drawer to call the attention of his master the innkeeper to the fact. The "White Hart" was a noted carrier's inn, before the stage-coach with its luggage-stored "boot" was invented, where the carriers from Chesham, in Bucks, were accustomed to lodge, and who, probably, brought to London the lace and various articles of wooden ware, for which the town was famous.

¹ This was the estate called "Aldewych."

CHAPTER XX

"Kingsgate"—Accident to Charles II.—"Sairey Gamp"—Whetstone Park—The three Dukes and the Beadle—A Gentleman shot in Great Queen Street—Richard Pendrell—State of Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1645—Strype's Description of the Fields.

TURNING eastward down Holborn, there is nothing remarkable until we come to "Kingsgate," which, although not named in Agas' Map, is clearly shown. In the 1654 map it is named and well delineated, and it led to a road which was called "Kings-way," now "Theobald's Road." Whence it got its name I know not, and am rather inclined to think that it was the Royal entrance to the extensive hunting-ground, which lay north of London. Timbs says it was so called because it was the Royal road to Newmarket; and in this he is somewhat borne out, because Pepys enters in his Diary under date of 7th March 1669: "I hear that to morrow the King and the Duke of York set out for Newmarket, by three in the morning, to some foot and horse races; to be abroad ten or twelve days." And next day he says: "To White Hall, from whence the King and the Duke of York went by three in the morning, and had the misfortune to be overset with the Duke of York, the Duke of Monmouth, and the Prince (Rupert) at the King's Gate in Holborne; and the King all dirty, but no hurt. How it came to pass, I know not, but only it was dark, and the torches did not, they say, light the coach as they should do."

It was afterwards made a thoroughfare, and called Kingsgate Street; it stood a little to the east of Southampton Street, between 116 and 117 High Holborn.

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It is all pulled down now, and future generations will have to draw upon their imaginations for a realisable picture of the street where dwelt the immortal Sairey Gamp. We, who knew the little shabby street, can thoroughly relish Charles Dickens' description of it.

"Mr. Pecksniff had been to the undertaker, and was now upon his way to another officer in the train of mourning—a female functionary, a nurse, and watcher, and performer of nameless offices about the persons of the dead—whom he had recommended. Her name, as Mr. Pecksniff gathered from a scrap of writing in his hand, was Gamp; her residence in Kingsgate Street, High Holborn. So Mr. Pecksniff in a hackney cab was rattling over Holborn stones, in quest of Mrs. Gamp.

"This lady lodged at a bird fancier's; next door but one to the celebrated mutton pie shop, and directly opposite to the original cat's meat warehouse; the renown of which establishments was duly heralded on their respective fronts. It was a little house, and this was the more convenient; for Mrs. Gamp being, in her highest walk of art, a monthly nurse, or, as her sign-board boldly had it 'Midwife,' and lodging in the first floor front, was easily assailable at night by pebbles, walking-sticks, and fragments of tobacco pipe; all much more efficacious than the street door knocker, which was so constructed as to wake the street with ease, and even spread alarms of fire in Holborn, without making the smallest impression on the premises to which it was addressed.

"It chanced on this particular occasion that Mrs. Gamp had been up all the previous night, in attendance upon a ceremony to which the usage of gossips has given that name which expresses, in two syllables, the curse pronounced on Adam. It chanced that Mrs. Gamp had not been regularly engaged, but had been

Kingsgate Street

called in, at a crisis, in consequence of her great repute, to assist another professional lady with her advice; and thus it happened that, all points of interest in the case being over, Mrs. Gamp had come home again to the bird fancier's, and gone to bed. So when Mr. Pecksniff drove up in the hackney cab, Mrs. Gamp's curtains were drawn close, and Mrs. Gamp was fast asleep behind them.

"If the bird fancier had been at home, as he ought to have been, there would have been no great harm in this; but he was out, and his shop was closed. The shutters were down, certainly, and in every pane of glass there was at least one tiny bird in a tiny bird cage, twittering and hopping his little ballet of despair, and knocking his head against the roof; while one unhappy goldfinch who lived outside a red villa, with his name on the door, drew the water for its own drinking, and mutely appealed to some good man to drop a farthing's worth of poison in it. Still the door was shut. Mr. Pecksniff tried the latch, and shook it, causing a cracked bell outside to ring most mournfully; but no one came. The bird fancier was an easy shaver also, and a fashionable hairdresser also; and, perhaps, he had been sent for, express, from the court end of the town, to trim a lord, or cut and curl a lady; but, however that might be, there, upon his own ground, he was not; nor was there any more distinct trace of him to assist the imagination of an enquirer, than a professional print or emblem of his calling (much favoured of the trade) representing a hairdresser of easy manners curling a lady of distinguished fashion, in the presence of a patent upright grand piano.

"Noting these circumstances, Mr. Pecksniff, in the innocence of his heart, applied himself to the knocker; but, at the very first double knock, every window in the street became alive with female heads; and before he could repeat the performance, whole troops of married

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ladies (some about to trouble Mrs. Gamp themselves very shortly) came flocking round the steps; all crying out with one accord and with uncommon interest, 'Knock at the winder, sir, knock at the winder. Lord bless you, don't lose no more time than you can help—knock at the winder!'

"Acting upon this suggestion, and borrowing the driver's whip for the purpose, Mr. Pecksniff soon made a commotion among the first floor flower pots, and roused Mrs. Gamp, whose voice—to the great satisfaction of the matrons—was heard to say, 'I'm coming.'

"'He's as pale as a muffin,' said one lady, in allusion to Mr. Pecksniff.

"'So he ought to be, if he's the feelings of a man,' observed another.

"A third lady (with her arms folded) said she wished he had chosen any other time for fetching Mrs. Gamp, but it always happened so with her.

"It gave Mr. Pecksniff much uneasiness to find from these remarks that he was supposed to have come to Mrs. Gamp upon an errand touching—not the close of life, but the other end. Mrs. Gamp herself was under the same impression; for, throwing open the window, she cried behind the curtains, as she hastily attired herself—'Is it Mrs. Perkins?'

"'No!' returned Mr. Pecksniff sharply, 'nothing of the sort.'

"'What, Mr. Whilks!' cried Mrs. Gamp; 'don't say it's you, Mr. Whilks, and that poor creetur Mrs. Whilks with not even a pin-cushion ready. Don't say it's you, Mr. Whilks!'

"'It isn't Mr. Whilks,' said Pecksniff; 'I don't know the man. Nothing of the kind. A gentleman is dead; and some person being wanted in the house, you have been recommended by Mr. Mould, the undertaker.'

Whetstone Park

“As she was, by this time, in a condition to appear, Mrs. Gamp, who had a face for all occasions, looked out of the window with her mourning countenance, and said she would be down directly. But the matrons took it very ill that Mr. Pecksniff’s mission was of so unimportant a kind; and the lady with her arms folded rated him in good round terms, signifying that she would be glad to know what he meant by terrifying delicate females ‘with his corpses’; and giving it as her opinion that he was quite ugly enough to know better. The other ladies were not at all behindhand in expressing similar sentiments; and the children, of whom some scores had now collected, hooted and defied Mr. Pecksniff quite savagely. So, when Mrs. Gamp appeared, the unoffending gentleman was glad to hustle her, with very little ceremony, into the cabriolet, and drove off overwhelmed with popular execration.”

There is nothing to interest us in Holborn until we come to Little Turnstile, which was one of three to keep the cattle in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, and there we find a place running between Holborn and the Fields, called Whetstone Park. Parton, in his book on the Parish of St. Giles, tells us that the eastern half of Whetstone Park was built by Mr. Whetstone, a parishioner and vestryman of that period, and acquired the name from him, while the western half, continued by a Mr. Phillips, was called Phillips Rents, a title which was afterwards dropped and merged into the former one. There is extant a token of Whetstone’s showing he was a tobacconist. It is inscribed as follows:—“William Whetstone—In the field a black boy, holding a tobacco leaf in the right hand, and carrying a roll of tobacco under his left arm. *Rev.*—In Holborne, 1653—W.I.W. in the field.” Whetstone was overseer of St. Giles in the Fields in 1655, and it is probably his wife, of whom

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Hatton writes in his *New View of London*, 1708, p. 264: "There is a small monument on one of the south pillars of this Church (St. Giles) with the following inscription: 'Here resteth the Body of Jane, late Wife of William Whetstone of this Parish, who departed this life the 11th of April 1653, being 23 years of Age.

Earth hath possess'd her Ashes, Clay and Dust,
And Heaven contains her Soul among the Just.

Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain: but a Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.'"

Whetstone Park seems to have early earned a very unsavoury reputation, owing to the character of its inhabitants, and many are the comments upon it in the writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. But it was made famous by a gross outrage on 26th February 1671, of which there is such conclusive evidence that there can be no doubt of its occurrence. J. H. Jesse, in his *Memoirs of the Court of England under the Stuarts*, ed. 1857, iii. 116, quotes some passages from the letters of Andrew Marvel, who writes under date of 28th February: "On Saturday night last, or, rather, Sunday morning at two o'clock, some persons reported to be of great quality, together with other gentlemen, set upon the watch and killed a poor beadle, praying for his life upon his knees, with many wounds: warrants are out for apprehending some of them, but they are fled." Again he writes, a short time afterwards: "Doubtless you have heard before this time, how Monmouth, Albemarle, Dunbane, and seven or eight gentlemen, fought the watch and killed a poor beadle: they have all got their pardon for Monmouth's sake, but it is an act of great scandal."

In the MSS. of J. J. Rogers, Esq., of Penrose, Cornwall, published by the Historical MSS. Commis-

The Three Dukes

sion, occurs the following:—"1670, the last of Feb. London. Jo Pennecke to John Rogers. Saturday last at night, was killed a beadle, the constable's assistant, for attempting a house in or near Whetstone Park, a scandalous place, where was the Duke of Monmouth, the Duke of Albemarle, and the Duke of Somerset, with others, at a very unseasonable time." And in the MSS. belonging to S. H. Le Fleming, of Rydall Hall, published by the same Commission, we find: "28 Feb. 1670-71. On Saturday night, or rather Sunday morning, happened an unfortunate accident near Holborn. Several persons of quality being interrupted by the Constable and his Company, were by them resisted. One of the beadles was wounded and died." "March 7, 1670. 1. His Majesty considering the late sad accident of killing the beadle near Holborn, has changed the ballet, intended to have been continued till Shrove tide, into common dancing; they, therefore, were this evening at Clarendon House. 2nd. His Majesty, in detestation of the late horrid barbarous fact, has called a Council, commanded the Chief Justice to attend him there, to give him an account of the matter; and, considering the many mischiefs that may arise, and have lately, by persons under pretence of masquerade, intended, it is said, to have strictly prohibited the same; but, after consideration it was thought fit to certify to the Justice of the Peace that the Guards have orders, upon all occasions, to assist the watch in any part of the town against all persons of whatsoever quality they be."

Wade, in his *British History Chronologically arranged*, has: "28 Feb. 1671. The Duke of Monmouth, who had contrived the outrage on Coventry, in a drunken frolic, with the young Duke of Albemarle and others, deliberately kills a ward beadle. Charles, to save his son, pardoned all the murderers."

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A ballad was made upon the subject, which may be found in *Poems on Affairs of State from the Time of Oliver Cromwell to the Abdication of King James the Second*, fifth ed. 1703, vol. i. 147 :—

“ON THE THREE DUKES KILLING THE BEADLE ON
SUNDAY MORNING, FEB. 26, 1761.

“Near Holborn lies a Park of great renown,
The place, I do suppose, is not unknown ;
For brevity's sake the name I shall not tell,
Because most genteel readers know it well.
Since Middle Park near Charing Cross was made
They say there is a great decay of trade.
'Twas there a gleek¹ of Dukes, by fury brought,
With bloody mind a sickly damsel sought,
And against law, her castle did invade

In came the watch disturb'd with sleep and Ale,
By noises shrill, but they could not prevail,
T'appease their Graces ; straight rose mortal jars
Betwixt the Night Black-guard and silver stars ;
Then fell the Beadle by a Ducal hand.
For daring to pronounce the sawcy stand.
The way in blood certain renown to win
Is first with bloody noses to begin,
The high born youths their hasty errand tell,
Dam ye you rogue, we'll send your soul to Hell.
They need not send a messenger before,
They're too well known there to stay long at door.
See what mishaps dare e'en invade Whitehall ;
This silly fellow's death puts off the ball,
And disappoints the Queen, poor little chuck,
I warrant 'twould have danc'd it like a duck.
The fidlers, voices, entries, all the sport
And the gay show put off, where the brisk court
Anticipates in rich subsidy coats
All that is got by mercenary votes ;
Yet shall Whitehall the innocent, the good,
See these men dance all daub'd with lace and blood !
Near t'other Park there stands an aged Tree,²
As fit as if 'twere made o' th' once for the three,
Where that no ceremony may be lost,
Each Duke for state may have a separate Post.”

¹ Gleek, a game at cards played by three persons.

² The Gallows at Tyburn.

Whetstone Park

But the place did not improve with years, for we read in *The Protestant Domestic Intelligence* of 14th February 1680: "In Great Queen Street we have advice that on Monday the 10th of this instant, between 11 and 12 of the clock, in the evening, several gentlemen being upon the ramble, went into Whetstone Park (that place for all impieties), where they had not been long before they came to the house of one Petty, who kept an ale-house, where they thundered at the door for admittance, which, as 'tis said, being refused, they began to break the windows, and commit some other disorders with their flambows,¹ which so enraged the ale-keeper, that, charging his musket with a brace of bullets, he followed them up Great Queen Street, where they stopped, and fell to pull down another victualler's lattice, upon which the guard came up and encompassed them, and afterwards disarmed them; which Petty, as 'tis said, perceiving, discharged his musket, and shot one of the gentlemen, being nephew to a person of honour, quite through his knees, and lightly hurted another. Upon this shot, the gentleman fell, and was taken up and carried into a house, where, notwithstanding the best skill Chirurgeons could use, he only lived till 3 in the morning, and then died; so that the Constable of the watch securing Petty, he was carried before a justice of the peace; who, upon examination of the matter, thought fit to commit him to Newgate, where he now remains, in order to be tried the next sessions."

That the place was notorious for its infamy may be guessed from the fact that, in 1682, a country man being decoyed into one of the houses and robbed, went into Smithfield and collected an angry mob of about 500 apprentices, who marched on Whetstone Park, broke open the houses and destroyed the furniture.

¹ Torches.

Old Time Aldwych

The constables and watchmen being outnumbered, sent for the soldiers of the guard, who dispersed them, and took eleven; nevertheless, the next night another mob stormed the place, broke in the doors, smashed the windows, and cut the feather beds to pieces. After this it must have improve, for Hatton, writing in 1708, says it is "mostly stables now."

In Turnstile Lane lived Richard Pendrell, of Royal Oak fame: at least he lived there in 1668. It is supposed that on the Restoration he came to London, and settled in St. Giles' parish, as being near the Court. He was buried in St. Giles' churchyard.

The following petition shows the state of Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1645:—

"To the Honourable The Knights, Citizens and Burgesses now assembled in PARLIAMENT. The humble Petition of the Parishioners of the Parishes of *St. Clement Danes, St. Dunstons in the West, St. Andrews, Holborne, and St. Giles* in the County of *Middlesex*, in or neare unto *Lincolns Inne Fields*.

"SHEWETH. That whereas your *Petitioners* with other *Inhabitants* of the said *Parishes*, have to their great comfort, health, and benefit, time out of mind, enjoyed free liberty to walke, recreate, and disport themselves with all kinds of lawfull exercises; as likewise to Traine, Muster, and dry Cloathes in three waste Common fields, called by the names of *Purse field, Fickets field, and Cup field*, adjoining to the West side of the Honourable Society of Lincolne's inne. And whereas by the Statute of 35 Eliz. c. 6, and sundry *Proclamations* both of Queene *Elizabeth*, King *James*, and King *Charles*, all *New Buildings* (but on old foundations) *within three miles of any of the Gates of the City of London, and the inclosing and taking in of any part of the Commons or waste grounds within that distance, here-*

Lincoln's Inn Fields

tofore used for training or mustering of Souldiers, shooting, walking, or other recreations, for the comfort and health of the inhabitants of the said City and Suburbs thereof, have been prohibited under severe penalties; and such New Buildings thereby, as also by the Statutes of 27 Eliz. c. 5, 21 Jacobi c. 34, by divers judgements in Star Chamber, and other His Majesties Courts of justice, and by the Judges of the Kings Bench in many late charges to the Grand Jury of Middlesex, declared to be publique Nusances to the said City and this whole Kingdome, and that of so high and dangerous consequence, that by the wisdom of Queene Elizabeth, King James, and sundry Parliaments in their Reignes, they have been particularly by name excepted out of divers generall Parliamentary Pardons, as no way fit to be dispensed with in the least degree.

“Yet one William Newton, Gent. for his owne private lucre, contrary to the said Statutes, Proclamations and judgements, hath by himselfe and his Assignes, within five or six yeeres last past, erected very many buildings on new foundations, (inhabited for the most part by *Popish Recusants*) in some whereof *Masses* are usually said, and caused many thousand loads of Dung and Dirt to be laid in the said Fields, (now used as a common lay stall) and made a common Horse poole therein: by means whereof your Petitioners are much hindred, and almost quite deprived of their former liberty of Walking, Training, drying of Cloathes, and recreating themselves in the said fields, the waies over them have become founderaus and impassable in wet weather; the aire corrupted, the Sewers surcharged and choaked up, the poore of their Parishes like to be much encreased; sundry Papists, Forrainers, leud idle wicked persons harboured amongst them, Ale houses, Tavernes, Tobacco shops, Baudy houses, and other places of disorder

Old Time Aldwych

multiplied ; the prises of all provision, Timber and fuell greatly enhanced, infectious diseases propagated, new streets uncleansed, their Churches disabled to conteine halfe the Parishioners, their Parishes made uncapable of good government, trading decayed, and the City and Countrey much impoverished.

“ Therefore they most humbly pray this *Honourable House*, to take the premises and these their grievances into your grave and serious considerations, to prevent all new buildings by him intended for the future, within the said Fields and Parishes ; and to afford them such speedy reliefe herein, as unto your wisdomes shall seem most meet. And your Petitioners shall, &c.”

It would seem that this petition did not meet with much success, for if we look at the 1654 map, we find that although much circumscribed, these fields are still unenclosed ; and in the map taken after the great fire, they are enclosed, and have cross footpaths. Strype, coming still later, says of them : “ *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, a very curious spacious Place, with an excellent *Air*, and therefore garnished with three Rows of very good Houses, very well inhabited, viz. *Portugal Row* on the South side, the *Arched Row* on the West side, and *Holborn*, or *Newman's Row* on the North side. Of which the two first are very large, and for the generality taken up by the *Nobility* and *Gentry*. The East side lieth open to *Lincolns Inn Garden*, which gives a delightful Prospect to the *Inhabitants* : It is a great Thoroughfare both for Horse and Foot ; and hath these Places for Passage ; on the North side is great *Turnstile Alley* ; a great Thoroughfare which leadeth into *Holborn*, a place inhabited by *Shoemakers*, *Sempsters*, and *Milleners* ; for which it is of a considerable *Trade* and well noted ; at the Entrance of this *Alley*, and on the Back side of *Holborn Row*, is *Whetstone Park*, once famous for its infamous and vicious

Lincoln's Inn Fields

Inhabitants; which some Years since were forced away; and out of this Place there are several small *Alleys* which lead into *Holborn*. And, on the North west End there is a Passage into *Holborn*, through little *Turnstile Alley*, very ordinary. Then Southwards there are two open Passages, the one into *Lincoln's Inn*, and Little *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, now converted into *Buildings*, and the other at the West End, leading into *Clare Market*, through *Sheffield Street*. And then Westwards, over against *Portugal Row*, is a Passage into *Bear Yard*, with a Free Stone pavement. Next to it is the *Arch* which leadeth into *Duke Street*: More Northwards, and turning by *Powis House*, sometime the Seat of Sir *John Somers* (after Lord *Somers*) late Lord Chancellor of *England*, there is a Passage into *Queen Street*."

CHAPTER XXI

Lincoln's Inn Fields, early Eighteenth Century—Babington's Execution—That of Lord William Russell—The Fields enclosed and built round—Their previous State—Mr. Povy's House—Newcastle House—Little Queen Street—Charles and Mary Lamb—The Gordon Riots—Mr. Maberly's House wrecked—Trial.

IN the reign of George I. Lincoln's Inn Fields, according to Gay, in his *Trivia*, was no safe place after dark :

“Where *Lincoln's Inn*, wide Space, is rail'd around,
Cross not with vent'rous Step ; there oft' is found
The lurking Thief, who, while the Day light shone,
Made the Walls echo with his begging Tone :
That Crutch which, late, Compassion mov'd, shall wound
Thy bleeding Head, and fell thee to the Ground.
Though thou art tempted by the Link-man's Call,
Yet trust him not along the lonely Wall ;
In the Mid-way he'll quench the flaming Brand,
And share the Booty with the pilf'ring Band.
Still keep the publick Streets, where oily Rays
Shot from the Crystal Lamp, o'erspread the Ways.”

Again, we have evidence that Lincoln's Inn Fields was the haunt of the vagrant in the *Spectator*, No. 6. Sir Roger is reported as saying : “Scarecrow the beggar in Lincoln's Inn Fields, who disabled himself in his right leg, and ask alms all day to get himself a warm supper and a trull at night, is not half so despicable a wretch, as such a man of sense. The beggar has no relish above sensations : he finds rest more agreeable than motion ; and, while he has a warm fire and his doxy, never reflects that he deserves to be whipped.” These beggars, after the Restoration, pretended to have been old king's soldiers who had been disabled in one of the battles with

Lord William Russell

the Roundheads, such as Naseby and Marston Moor—they were most importunate, and were known by the name of “Rufflers.”

The Fields have also witnessed the execution of criminals, notably Babington and his companions on the 20th and 21st September 1586, for a Roman Catholic conspiracy against Queen Elizabeth, in which Mary Stuart was implicated. On Tuesday, 20th September, he and Ballard, with five others, were drawn on hurdles “from Tower Hill, through the Cittie of London, unto a Fielde at the upper end of Holborn, hard by the High way side to S. Giles, where was erected a Scaffolde convenient for the Execution.” This was performed with great barbarity: according to the usual custom, convicts for high treason were hanged, drawn, and quartered, and were generally hanged till they were dead; but in this case they were taken down while alive, and then disembowelled, and Babington, whilst under the executioner’s knife, was heard to murmur, “Parce mihi, Domine Jesu.” But it must be said to the credit of Elizabeth, that when she heard of it she gave orders that the other seven, who were to suffer next day, should hang until they were dead.

There was another execution here on the 21st July 1683, that of Lord William Russell, who was sentenced to death on 14th July for participation in the Rye House plot. Pennant gives a reason for the selection of this spot. “Party writers assert that he was brought here, in preference to any other spot, in order to mortify the citizens with the sight. In fact, it was the nearest open space to Newgate, the place of his Lordship’s confinement; otherwise the dragging him to Tower Hill, the usual concluding scene on these dreadful occasions, would have given his enemies full opportunity of indulging the imputed malice.” His execution is thus described by

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Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, in his *History of his own Time*. "Tillotson and I went in the coach with him to the place of execution. Some of the crowd that filled the streets wept, while others insulted; he was touched with the tenderness that the one gave him, but did not seem at all provoked by the other. He was singing psalms a great part of the way; and said he hoped to sing better very soon. As he observed the great crowds of people all the way, he said to us, 'I hope I shall quickly see a much better assembly.' When he came to the scaffold he walked about it four or five times. Then he turned to the sheriffs, and he delivered his paper. . . . After he had delivered this paper he prayed by himself; then Tillotson prayed with him. After that he prayed again by himself; and then undressed himself, and laid his head on the block, without the least change of countenance; and it was cut off at two strokes."

Pennant says that Lincoln's Inn Fields would have been one of our most beautiful squares had it been built on a regular plan. The disposition of those grounds was, in 1618, by a Commission from the King, entrusted to the care of the Lord Chancellor Bacon, the Earls of Pembroke, Worcester, Arundel, and numbers of other noblemen and principal gentry. In the Commission it shows forth "That more public works, near and about the City of London, had been undertaken in the sixteen years of that reign, than in ages heretofore; and that the grounds called Lincolne's Inn Fields were very much planted round with dwellings of noblemen and gentlemen of qualitie; but at the same time, it was deformed by cottages and mean buildings, encroachments on the fields, and nysances to the neighbourhood. The Commissioners were therefore directed to reform those grievances; and according to their discretion, to frame and reduce those fields (called in the Statute of the 8th of

Lincoln's Inn Fields

Geo. II. c. 26, *Cup Field* and *Purse field*) both for sweetness, uniformitie, and comeliness, into such walks, partitions, or other plottes, and in such sorte, manner and forme, both for publike health and pleasure, as by the said Inigo Jones is or shall be accordingly drawn, by way of map."

This was very well meant, but it was not carried out, and as we have seen by the Petition of 1645, the common land was being encroached on, and the place made a receptacle for filth and rubbish. If we look at the map taken after the great fire we shall see that a square is enclosed, but I take it, only by wooden pailings, for it was not enclosed by iron railings until 1735. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1773 (p. 387) I find, in a life of Sir Joseph Jekyl: "About the year 1736 he was rode over in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and hurt his hip, which was the occasion of that place being enclosed with iron rails, and beautified; before which it was a receptacle for rude fellows, to air horses, and many robberies were committed in it." The Act of Parliament quoted by Pennant was passed in 1735, and is called "An Act to enable the present and future proprietors and inhabitants of the houses in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, in the County of *Middlesex*, to make a rate on themselves, for raising money sufficient to enclose, clean, and adorn the said fields." It was an agreement between Sir William Cowper, Robert Henley, and James Cowper, of the one part, and certain trustees of Lincoln's Inn of the other part, whereby in consideration of Sir W. C., etc., having permission to build, and extend Portugal Row and Newman's Row, they were to level the fields, which were to be "planned, cast into grass plotts and gravel walks of convenient breadth, railed all along on each side, and set with rows of trees, according to a plott or model thereto annexed." This was to be done within two years. Further on in the Act it describes the then

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state of the Fields. " And whereas the said great square now called *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, situate in the several parishes of *Saint Giles in the Fields*, *Saint Clement Danes*, and *Saint Andrew Holbourn*, in the County of *Middlesex*, hath for some years past laid waste and in great disorder, whereby the same has become a receptacle for rubbish, dirt, and nastiness of all sorts, brought thither: and laid not only by the inhabitants of the said field, but many others, which has not been removed or taken away by the several scavengers of the parishes wherein the said fields are situate as aforesaid; but, also, for want of proper fences to inclose the same, great mischiefs have happened to many of his Majesty's subjects going about their lawful occasions, several of whom have been killed, and others hurt and maimed by horses, which have been from time to time aired and rode in the said fields; and, by reason of the said fields being kept open, many wicked and disorderly persons have frequented and met together therein, using unlawful sports and games, and drawing in and enticing young persons into gaming, idleness, and other vicious courses; and vagabonds, common beggars, and other disorderly persons resort therein, where many robberies, assaults, outrages, and enormities have been, and continually are committed, notwithstanding the watch or guard allowed by the several parishes, wherein the said fields are situate, for preventing the same; and, whereas the south, west, and north parts of the said fields are encompassed with houses, many of which are inhabited by the owners and proprietors thereof, who, with the other inhabitants, cannot go to and from their respective habitations in the night season without danger, and therefore are desirous to prevent any mischiefs for the future, and to inclose, clean, repair, and beautify the said fields in a graceful manner, and are willing and desirous that an adequate

Newcastle House

contribution may for that purpose be raised by and amongst themselves ; wherefore, and to the end that the said fields may be inclosed, cleansed, and adorned, and kept in repair for the future, the said proprietors and inhabitants do most humbly beseech your most excellent majesty that it may be enacted."

We may pass by the fable of Inigo Jones planning the size of Lincoln's Inn Fields to equal the base of the Great Pyramid, and, as we have seen, they were not planned out for more than a century after he had received his commission. As a matter of fact, Jones only built some houses on the west side of the Fields. Whether it was at one of these that Pepys paid a visit to Mr. Povy, and went into such ruptures with, I do not know. "19 Jan. 1663. To Mr. Povy's, where really he made a most excellent and large dinner ; of their variety, even to admiration, he bidding us, in a frolique, to call for what we had a mind, and he would undertake to give it us ; and we did for prawns, swan, venison, after I had thought that the dinner was quite done, and he did immediately produce it, which I thought great plenty, and he seems to set up his rest in this plenty, and the neatness of his house, which he after dinner showed me, from room to room, so beset with delicate pictures ; and above all, a piece of perspective in his closet in the low parlour ; his stables, where was some delicate horses, and the very racks painted, and mangers, with a neat leaden painted cistern, and the walls done with Dutch tiles, like my chimnies."

At the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields and Great Queen Street is a beautiful house, once known as Newcastle House, as Pennant tells us, "formerly inhabited by the well-known minister, the late Duke of Newcastle."¹

¹ Thomas Pelham Holles, Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Newcastle-under-Lyme, minister to George II.

Old Time Aldwych

It was built about the year 1686 by the Marquis of Powis, and called Powis House, and afterwards sold to the late noble owner. The architect was Captain William Winde. It is said that Government had it once in contemplation to have bought and settled it officially on the Great Seal. At that time it was inhabited by the Lord Keeper, Sir Nathan Wright." The Marquis of Powis here spoken of followed the fortunes of James II., and was by him rewarded with the empty title of Duke of



NEWCASTLE HOUSE, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS—1850.

Powis. This house was for many years the headquarters of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, until their removal to Northumberland Avenue.

Turning down Great Queen Street, on the right leading into Holborn, is Little Queen Street, now destroyed in order to make Kingsway; a street not remarkable for much, and chiefly memorable for the Lamb tragedy. Charles Lamb, the essayist, then (1796) lived with his family in this street. They were poor, Charles's salary as a clerk in the India House, and what his sister could

The Lambs

earn by needlework, in addition to the interest on some small legacies, forming their sole means of subsistence. His father was old, and sinking into his dotage; his mother was an invalid, with apparently a strain of insanity. Mary Lamb was overworked, and the continued strain and anxiety began to tell upon her mind. On 22nd September 1796 a terrible blow fell upon the family. Mary Lamb, irritated with a little apprentice girl who was working in the family sitting-room, snatched a knife from the table, pursued the child round the room, and finally stabbed her mother, who had interposed in the girl's behalf. The wound was instantly fatal, Charles being at hand only in time to wrest the knife from his sister, and prevent further mischief. An inquest was held, and a verdict found of temporary insanity. Mary Lamb would, in the ordinary course, have been transferred to a public lunatic asylum, but interest was made with the authorities, and she was given into the custody of her brother, then only just of age, who undertook to be her guardian, an office which he discharged, under the gravest difficulties and discouragements, for the remainder of his life. Needless to say, the family at once left the neighbourhood.

I do not suppose there is one of my readers who has not read in *Barnaby Rudge* the story of the Lord George Gordon Riots in 1780, and I am not going to retell the tale, except in so far as it refers to the district that I chronicle, and all I shall have to say on the subject is taken from authentic and contemporary sources. For instance, here is something relating to Little Queen Street, taken from a Narrative of the Riots by William Vincent, of Gray's Inn: "It is impossible to give any adequate description of the events of Wednesday. Notice was sent round to the public prisons of the King's Bench, Fleet, etc., by the Mob, at what time they would come

Old Time Aldwych

and burn them down. The same kind of infernal humanity was exercised towards Mr. Langdale, a distiller in Holborn, and several other Romish individuals. Three boys went through the streets, and in particular down Holborn, in the middle of the day, with iron bars, got from the railing before Lord Mansfield's house, extorting money at every shop, huzzaing and shouting 'No Popery!' and though numbers were passing and re-passing, the inhabitants durst not refuse them money, nor durst any body attempt to secure them, to have them punished. Small parties of the like daring nature were formed in other parts, and the whole city was laid under contribution. One man in particular was mounted on horseback, and refused to take anything but gold. Two men, in the broad day, not contented with the former mischief, got into Mr. Maberly's house in Queen Street, and staid for upwards of an hour, knocking down the wainscoating, and every bit of wood work they could, with safety to themselves; and though a great many peaceable well dressed people looked on, no one molested them. In the afternoon all the shops were shut, and bits of blue silk, by way of flags, hung out at most houses, with the words 'No Popery!' chalked on the doors and shutters, by way of deprecating the fury of the insurgents, from which no person thought himself secure."

We find the trial of two persons for the destruction of Mr. Maberly's house in the Old Bailey Sessions Papers: "James Murray and Samuel Wallis were indicted for that they, together with fifty other persons, and more, did unlawfully, riotously, and tumultuously assemble on the 6th of June, to the disturbance of the publick peace, and pull down the dwelling-house of Stephen Maberly, against the form of the statute, etc.

"*Thomas Aldis* sworn. I am a journey man to Mr.

Gordon Riots

Maberly. On Monday, the fifth of June, about fifty people assembled before Mr. Maberly's house, and began to throw stones at it; they broke the windows in the fore part of the house. They destroyed some part of the parlour, which was not furnished, but was fitting up. The next day Mr. Maberly had some boards put up to prevent any one's coming into the house; on that evening, which was the Tuesday, there assembled about two hundred people before the house, and pulled the house to pieces. Mr. Maberly concealed his goods in the cellar, under the shop. The mob continued there from Tuesday night till Wednesday about two o'clock. I was in the shop. I saw a person; I do not know who it was, with an iron bar in his hand, tearing up the floor of the shop; when they had got the floor up, they found the goods and stock in trade. They carried them into the street and burned them.

"What number of people were in the house at that time?—I believe about one hundred.

"Could you distinguish any of them so as to know them again?—I do not think I could.

"Did they tear all the floor up that night?—No, there is some left now. They tore up about 15 or 16 foot of the floor; it was chiefly destroyed on the Tuesday.

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"Thomas Barber sworn. I am an officer of the excise.

"Was you in Little Queen Street on Wednesday, the 7th of June?—I was there.

"What was the occasion of your going there?—A gentleman acquainted with Mr. Maberly's brother was in company with me, and asked me if I would go there; he went to Great Queen Street; he would not go further. I said I would go to the house; this was about five in the afternoon. When I came to the publick

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house opposite Mr. Maberly's, I saw the prisoner in Mr. Maberly's parlour. I staid there between ten and fifteen minutes, and returned to the company I had left.

"What did you see prisoner do?—I saw both the prisoners assisting in destroying the things in Mr. Maberly's house. I saw the prisoners receive them from the people in the first room on the ground floor. They brought them out of the passage that goes into the parlour, and carried them to the fire.

"Did the goods come from the back part of the house?—Yes, there were several fires burning; I am positive to six, but I believe there might be more.

"Did you take particular notice of the prisoners before?—Yes; I did take particular notice of them; I had known them upwards of two years before.

"Are you certain to the persons?—Yes, by virtue of the oath I have taken, I swear they were both there.

"What number of people were there about the house at the time?—Great Queen Street and Little Queen Street were full; there were so many I cannot tell within a hundred, but I believe there were four hundred people.

"Who gave the information?—I was sitting in the Rotation Office in Litchfield Street; I saw the prisoner Wallis brought there by Atwood, a patrol for Bloomsbury. I then went in and related what I had seen him and Murray do. I did not know he was in custody before. While I was doing my duty at a brew house, I saw Wallis go by. I secured him, and took him to the Litchfield Street Station; that was on the 23rd.

"WALLIS'S DEFENCE.

"We had witnesses, but they are gone now; we leave ourselves to the mercy of the Court.

"*Mr. Maberly's brother.* I never saw that man

Gordon Riots

(Barber) in my life; he says he was in my company. I was at home securing my life at the time.

"Barber. He says he never saw me before; he might not: I said I was with an acquaintance of Mr. Maberly's. We came to Great Queen Street, and I left Mr. Maberly's friend at the Queen's Head Tavern.

"BOTH NOT GUILTY."

The house of Mr. Cox, a brewer, in Great Queen Street, was plundered and burnt, and for helping to plunder and destroy the dwelling-house of Edmund Boggis, a chandler, in New Turnstile, Dennis the hangman was found guilty and hanged.

CHAPTER XXII

Great Queen Street—Oldwick Close and Aldewych—Freemason's Tavern and Hall—Chancellor's Mace stolen—Notables living in the Street—Sardinia Street—Gordon Riots and the Chapel—Trial—The King's Birthday kept in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

OF Great Queen Street, Parton, writing in 1822, says: "Great Queen Street bounds this division (St. Giles' Parish) on the south, and merits particular mention. This now handsome and spacious street stands on the site of the common footpath which anciently separated the south part, or Oldwick Close, properly so called, from the northern division of Aldewych, latterly called White Hart Close, which extended to Holborn. Its south side seems to have been built on, in a loose, straggling manner, near the close of Elizabeth's reign, from which it might have been called *Queen Street*; but there were no houses of consequence erected on it, until the reign of James I., when Inigo Jones is supposed to have been the architect of several of its best buildings, which were, afterwards, inhabited by persons of the first quality. This alteration took place about the time he laid out Lincoln's Inn Square, to which it forms a grand avenue. Pawlet House, Cherbury House, and Conway House were among these noble mansions, and are still remaining. And Mr. Pennant conjectures, some of the other houses, with brick plasters and architectural ornaments, to be works of the same master, whose classical taste they would certainly not discredit. 'Queen Street' (says Hatton, 1708) 'is a pleasant broad street, on the south side whereof are very good buildings and uniform.'

Aldewych

And Strype: 'Queen Street, almost opposite to Long Acre, which, after a narrow entrance openeth itself, and falleth into Lincoln's Inn Fields. It is a street graced with a goodly row of large uniform buildings on the south side, inhabited by nobility and gentry. But the north side is but indifferent, nor in consequence so well inhabited.'"

[*Par parenthèse*, and because I have Parton open at the place. I had better give a portion of what he says about Oldwick Close: "The south end of Aldewych, or Aldewych Field, contained part of the land called *Sprettony*, on the east; the Croft, or small close, called *La Hale*, and a field called *Layfield* adjoining; the whole consisting of about eight acres of land. These were situate in St. Giles' parish, and occupied the north and east parts of the *Campum de Aldewych*. The south side (containing also about eight acres) lay in the parish of St. Clement Danes. The whole of this land (forming the third division of the parish) had by various grants come into the possession of St. Giles' Hospital before its suppression, and was included in the exchange between Radcliffe and Henry VIII.; not that it is mentioned in that or any subsequent instrument by name, as, indeed, are few of the parochial lands, but it probably formed part of the eighteen acres mentioned there, to belong to the White Hart,¹ behind which it lay. On the sale and dispersion of the Hospital estates, Aldewych field or close came into the possession of the Holford family, a descendant of which, Henry Holford, Esq., held it in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., at the same time that Sir Henry Drury, Knight, held the south end, or St. Clement's half. . . . From Henry Holford and his heirs, part of the above land, probably by purchase, came into possession of Sir Edward Stradling and other persons,

¹ See page 278.

Old Time Aldwych

about the beginning of the reign of Charles I., who built various residences on it. Houses had, however, been previously raised on the side next the highway; together with the playhouse called *The Cockpit Theatre*. Both sides of Princes Street,¹ also (which was anciently a path dividing Aldewych field between the two parishes of St. Giles and St. Clement), had been built on as early as the latter end of the reign of Elizabeth, or at the very beginning of the reign of her successor. About this time the spot had acquired the name of *Oldwick Close*, and had 14 houses standing on its west end, or the east side of the present Drury Lane, as well as a second theatre called *The Phoenix*, which succeeded that of the *Cockpit*, which was demolished in the year 1617.

"A few years later, viz. 1629, *Oldwick Close* is thus, in part, described: 'All that piece of ground containing two acres, part of *Oldwick Close*, on the north side towards *Queen Street*, with a ditch; on the east towards *Lincoln's Inn*, with a common sewer; on the south with a ditch or fence, dividing it from other part of *Oldwick Close*, then before demised to John Iffery; and on the west, towards the back side of Drury Lane, with a ditch, or mud wall.' This plot of ground, in 1632, was in the possession of Sir Edward Stradling, and the celebrated Sir Kenelm Digby, the former of whom, in another deed of the same date, is said to have then recently built on his part, 'a fair mansion-house with stables and out-houses.'

"From the above extracts, a tolerably correct idea may be formed of the appearance of *Oldwick Close* previously to its being built on. In 1633, Sir Edward Stradling sold to one George Gage 'so much of the said piece of ground as did lie between the said Sir Kenelm

¹ Renamed Kemble Street in 1878, when Duke Street was renamed Sardinia Street.

Weld Street

Digby's partition wall, and the partition wall dividing the said Sir Edward Stradling's own ground, together with the mansion-house, stables,' &c. And in 1638 he leased to Dr. Gifford, for the term of 500 years, all the remainder of his portion of the above land, not sold to Gage. The whole of the above premises (as well Sir Kenelm Digby's as Sir Edward Stradling's) together with the 'mansion-house, barns, coach-houses, and other buildings, yards, orchards, gardens,' &c., were, in the year 1651, in the possession of Humphrey Weld, Esq., many years a magistrate for this district, and ancestor of the respectable family of the Welds, of Lulworth Castle, who, almost immediately, began to lay out, on each side of his own residence, the street which now bears his own name, corruptly called *Wild Street*; the whole east side of which, from an inscription on a tablet at one end of it, appears to have been finished in 1653. Other erections speedily followed these; and, in 1688, mention is made in another deed of 'a piece of ground leased to Robert Gifford, and the buildings thereon, except the several houses and stables therein particularly mentioned, and the houses *fronting* Weld Street (*i.e.* on the opposite or western side of the way) and also the houses in Duke Street.'"]

Going westward from Lincoln's Inn Fields, we notice on the south side the noble buildings of Freemason's Tavern and Hall. These were originally one, but are now separate buildings, the Grand Lodge buildings with its offices for Masonic Charities, Grand Secretary's Office, etc. etc., being on the west side of the tavern, and face Great Queen Street, the Hall being in the rear. The first Hall, which was behind the tavern, was commenced 1st May 1775, from the design of Thomas Sandby, R.A., and £5000 was raised by a Tontine towards its cost. It was opened and dedicated in solemn form 23rd May

Old Time Aldwych

1776, Lord Petre being Grand Master. It was considerably altered, and partly rebuilt about 1866, and it now stands as then.

We cannot now identify the houses of the celebrities who lived in this street, although we know that Lord Herbert's residence, Cherbury House, was near the corner of Weld Street. Another famous dweller here was Sir Heneage Finch, Lord Chancellor, and afterwards Earl of Nottingham. Peter Cunningham in his *Hand-book of London* is answerable for the following: "Through these fields (Lincoln's Inn) in the reign of Charles II., Thomas Sadler, a well-known thief, attended by his confederates, made his mock procession at night with the mace and purse of Lord Chancellor Finch, which they had stolen from the Lord Chancellor's closet in Great Queen Street, and were carrying off to their lodging in Knightrider Street. One of the confederates walked before Sadler, with the mace of the Lord Chancellor exposed on his shoulders; while another, equally prominent, follows after him carrying the Chancellor's purse. For this theft Sadler was executed at Tyburn." On 7th November 1677 Anthony-à-Wood enters in his Diary: "About one in the morning the Lord Chancellor Finch his mace was stolen out of his house in Queen Street. The seal lay under his pillow, so the thief missed it. The famous thief that did it was Thomas Sadler, soon after taken and hanged for it at Tyburn."

For the following list of notables who lived in Great Queen Street I am indebted to Thornbury and Walford's *Old and New London*. Sir Thomas Fairfax dated a printed proclamation from Great Queen Street, 12th February 1648, and is supposed, on that account, to have lived in the street. George Digby, second Earl of Bristol, lived here, as Evelyn says: "26th May 1671. The Earl of Bristol's house, in Queen Street (Lincoln's

Great Queen Street

Inn Fields), was taken for the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, and furnished with rich hangings of the King's. It consisted of seven rooms on a floor, with a long gallery, gardens, &c." And we get a glimpse of the great men who met there, for he goes on: "This day we met; the Duke of Buckingham, Earl of Lauderdale, Lord Culpepper, Sir George Carteret, Vice-Chamberlain, and myself had the oaths given us by the Earl of Sandwich, our President. It was to advise and counsel His Majesty, to the best of our abilities, for the well governing of his Foreign Plantations, &c., the form very little differing from that given to the Privy Council. We then took our places at the Board in the Council Chamber, a very large room furnished with atlases, maps, charts, globes, &c. Then came the Lord Keeper, Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Earl of Arlington, Secretary of State, Lord Ashley, Mr. Treasurer, Sir John Trevor, the other Secretary, Sir John Duncomb, Lord Allington, Mr. Grey, son of the Lord Grey, Mr. Henry Broncker, Sir Humphry Winch, Sir John Finch, Mr. Waller, and Colonel Titus, of the Bedchamber, with Mr. Slingsby, Secretary to the Council, and two Clerks of the Council, who had all been sworn two days before. Being all set, our Patent was read, and then the additional Patent, in which was recited this new establishment; then was delivered to each a copy of the Patent and instructions; after which we proceeded to business."

At Conway House, in this street, lived Lord Conway, an able soldier, defeated by the Scotch at Newburn. In the year 1733 the Earl of Rochford lived in Great Queen Street; here, too, about that time, lived Lady Dinely Goodyer, and Mrs. Kitty Clive, the actress. Sir Martin Ffolkes, an eminent scholar and antiquary, was born here in 1690. He was a great numismatist, and the first President of the Society of Antiquaries. It is recorded

Old Time Aldwych

that, in 1735, Ryan, the comedian, whose name was well known in connection with "Bartlemy Fair," was attacked in this street at midnight by a footpad, who fired a pistol in his face, severely wounding him in the jaw, and robbed him of his sword. He was hurt so badly, that a performance was given at Covent Garden for his benefit, when the Prince of Wales sent him a purse of a hundred guineas.

At No. 52 lived Sir Robert Strange, the eminent



OLD HOUSES IN GREAT QUEEN STREET -1846.

historical engraver, and adherent of Prince Charles Edward, "the Young Pretender." He died in 1792, and here his widow resided for some years afterwards. Another artist of renown who lived in this street was John Opie, R.A. He was living here in 1791, when his popularity was at its highest. In Opie's *Memoirs* we get a glimpse of the condition of Great Queen Street, when the roadway was sometimes blocked up with the carriages of his sitters. The great painter removed in

Great Queen Street

1792; and by the end of the century the street was no longer fashionable, the polite world having migrated westward. What the street was like we may imagine by the two old houses left us, and shown in this illustration. They are on the south side, Great Wild Street being to the right of the picture, and Lincoln's Inn Fields to the extreme left; No. 55 is over New Yard. In this lived James Hoole, the translator of Tasso, Metastasio, and Ariosto. Born in London in 1727, he devoted his leisure hours to literary pursuits, especially to the study of the Italian language, of which he made himself a perfect master. He was the author of three original tragedies, *Cyrus*, *Timanthes*, and *Cleonice*, which were acted at Covent Garden, also of some poems and a life of John Scott of Amwell, the Quaker poet. With Hoole lived Hudson, the painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds' master. In one of these two houses died, in 1766, Worlidge, an artist of some celebrity, who was famous for his etchings after the manner of Rembrandt. Richard Brinsley Sheridan lived in it for some years; many of the letters in Moore's *Life* are addressed to him here. How long Sheridan remained is not known, but it is related that he passed the day in seclusion at his house in Great Queen Street, on the occasion of Garrick's funeral, in 1779. The beautiful "Perdita," Mrs. Robinson, the quondam favourite of George IV. when Prince of Wales, appears to have lived in this house, shortly after her marriage in 1773; she describes the house in her *Memoirs* as "a large, old-fashioned mansion, the property of the widow of Mr. Worlidge."

Turning down Great Wild Street, we come to Sardinia Street, a squalid thoroughfare, which fully deserves its fate of being improved off the map of London. No one would care to go down it were it not for the Church of St. Anselm and St. Cecilia, which is on the south side

Old Time Aldwych

of the entrance to the street through the archway leading from Lincoln's Inn Fields. This is the oldest of the metropolitan places of worship now in the hands of the Roman Catholics in London, having been built in 1648. During the existence of the penal laws against Roman Catholics, the entrance to it was through the house of the Sardinian ambassador, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and it is very often now called the "Sardinian Chapel." On the 2nd June 1780 it was the scene of riot and pillage by a section of Lord George Gordon's supporters, who on that evening destroyed both this chapel and that belonging to the Bavarian embassy, in Warwick Street, Golden Square. The only reliable account of it is from the Sessions papers. At the Sessions held on Wednesday, 28th June 1780, and following days, "GEORGE SIMPSON was indicted for that he did unlawfully, maliciously, wilfully, and feloniously set fire to the dwelling-house of Victor Amada de la Tour, commonly called Marquis de Cordon. *2nd Count.* For setting fire to an out-house. *3rd Count.* For setting fire to the house generally. June 2nd.

"JOHN ROGERS sworn. I am a brickmaker, and live in Coffin Court. I came by the Sardinian ambassador's house between 11 and 12 o'clock. The chapel is in Duke Street, the house is in Lincoln's Inn Fields. I heard a noise in Duke Street; coming along I saw a fire in the street. I came and stood at the east end of the chapel to look, as other spectators did; I saw several people and the prisoner bringing out books, benches, and the lining of the chapel, and other things, and throwing them upon the fire.

"Did you know the prisoner?—I never saw him, to my knowledge, before that night.

"Are you sure it is he?—Yes, I stood by some stables facing the chapel door; the prisoner came up

Gordon Riots

to me, laid hold of me by the collar, and said, *D—your eyes, where are your colours?*

“What did he mean by your colours?—My not having a cockade in my hat, I suppose. I told him I had seen Lord Mountmorres in trouble in Parliament Street, that I offered him my cockade, and his lordship desired me to give it to his coachman, as somebody else had given him one, which I accordingly did; I threw the prisoner over my leg, and threw him down; I begged his pardon; then he left me and went to the fire; he took up 5 pieces of board, about the length of my arm, which were on fire, and set them against the right hand door-post going into the eastern door; immediately after that the door-post was on fire. It was then reported that the military were coming.

“You know for certain that the fire was occasioned by the boards he set there?—It was not on fire before he set the boards there, but I saw the post burning afterwards. When it was reported that the military were coming, the people who were spectators absconded, and I absconded myself.

“Was you the first who gave information of him?—I cannot say. I told the constable if he saw such a person to take him.

“Was it on your information he was taken up?—I believe it was. I got a party of soldiers, and he was taken to the London Hospital.

“Did you know of any reward at that time?—No, I did not know of it until I heard it mentioned by Mr. Chetham here. I wrote to Lord Hillborough that I wanted no fee or reward.

“Do you claim the reward?—No, I never shall. I do not want the reward.

“JOHN GOODRIDGE sworn. I am a carpenter in Shoe Lane; the prisoner lodged with me three months;

Old Time Aldwych

on Friday night, the 2nd June, he left my house about 9 in the evening, and was not home again till the next morning; I saw him the next morning about eight and nine o'clock. I asked him, *George, where have you been all night?* He said, *Master, I have been to the fire.* I said, *George, you had better been at your work or fitting for your work, and not lie out of my house.* I asked *what fire?* He said, *at the Danish ambassadors;* he said, *D—— my eyes, master, we have burnt it down, we have had fine fun!* and then he said he would go home to bed; he said, *if you live two or three days longer you will see half London on Fire.* He went home, and went to bed; he lay till two or three o'clock in the afternoon; he got up again and did a little work till about 7; he said he was so ill he could not do any more that night, but that, if I chose, he would do a little in the morning to make his work up, which he did; he had some roll and tea for breakfast, and went to bed on Sunday all day; on the Sunday night he came out about 8 or 9 o'clock; he said he would go out and get him something to drink and go to bed, which he did.

"JOHN BATES sworn. I am a carpenter.

"Do you know the situation of the Sardinian ambassador's chapel and house?—Yes.

"Is the chapel joining to the house?—Yes it is, on the north side.

"Is there any communication between the house and the chapel?—There is on the south side a covered passage, which leads from the south side of the house, from the one pair of stairs; underneath that is a place for bottles, for the use of the butler; and there was a door into the chapel below stairs from the butler's closet, which is now closed up; there is also a communication on the north side, which goes into the sacristy, for the servants and other people to go into the chapel.



OLD HOUSE (FORMERLY THE SARDINIAN EMBASSY), LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS—1855.

PUBLIC
WINDSWORTH
LIBRARY

Gordon Riots

“Does the chapel appear to be of equal date with the house?—The chapel was built in the year 1763; it had been burnt down.

“Is the chapel now burnt down entirely?—The north side of it is injured by the fire, the galleries are injured; and, I believe, six pillars were burnt, and a part of the floor.

“The chapel was built since the house?—In the year 1763 when the chapel was built, these communications, as I understand, were made, which were not before.

“It might be separated from the house without injuring the house at all?—Yes.

“Take away the chapel, and make windows of the doors, and the house will be complete?—Yes, they were windows before; they are taken out and reversed, and put on the south side.

“As a builder, do you suppose this chapel a dwelling-house, or a building adjoining to a house?—I look upon it as a building adjoining to a house.”

This is practically all the evidence. The prisoner called many witnesses as to character, and was ACQUITTED.

The chapel was immediately rebuilt, and enlarged by adding the site of the ambassador's stable to the west end.

Passing under the archway we once more enter Lincoln's Inn Fields, and are reminded of a little riot which occurred there in the reign of George I., thus recorded in *Mist's Journal*, 31st May 1718: “*Keeping the King's Birthday*.—On Wednesday night, a great Mob gathered about a Bonfire made before the Duke of Newcastle's House in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and flung the faggots about the Fields, and at the Windows; whereupon, several gentlemen and the Duke's servants came

Old Time Aldwych

out with drawn swords, and wounded several of the Mob ; a poor woman had her eye struck out with a fire stick."

The accompanying illustration shows the Sardinian ambassador's house which, I am happy to say, still exists, and the archway leading to Sardinia Street.

CHAPTER XXIII

Sir John Soane's Museum—Some of its Contents—Royal College of Surgeons—Its Museum—Serle and his Land—Serle's Coffee House—Portugal Street—"The Duke's Theatre"—Its Actors—Dorset Gardens Theatre—Pepys and "the Duke's Theatre."

AT No. 13, on the north side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, is Sir John Soane's Museum, a place not half known nor used, yet which is well worth a visit, if only to see the pictures by Hogarth therein contained. It is much easier of access than it used to be, as it is now open free from 11 to 5 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, from first Tuesday in March to last Friday in August; Monday and Saturday reserved for students. Cards for private days during the recess, and for students, are to be obtained from the curator at the Museum. Sir John Soane, who collected the contents, was the son of a Berkshire bricklayer; after he left school, he is said to have been engaged as errand boy by George Dance, jun., who, observing his artistic talent, took him into his office, and later transferred him to that of Henry Holland. He gained medals at the Academy, and a travelling studentship. He went to Italy, remained there three years, and, returning to England in 1780, set up as architect on his own account. He designed a greater number of public buildings than any contemporary; from the Bank of England in the City, to Chelsea Hospital at the western extremity; from Walworth in the southern, to Regent's Park in the northern suburbs. His last work (1833) was the State Paper Office in St. James's Park. He died at his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The

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greater part of his collection is more suitable to the student of architecture than the general public, but the latter will appreciate Hogarth's *Rake's Progress*, 8 paintings, purchased for 570 guineas; and his *Election*, 4 paintings, for 1650 guineas; also 3 pictures by Canaletti, one, *The Grand Canal at Venice*, his *chef d'œuvre*; *Van Tromp's Barges entering the Texel*, by J. M. W. Turner, R.A.; the *Study of a Head*, from one of Raphael's Cartoons—a relic saved from the wreck of the lost Cartoons, which remained in the possession of the family of the weaver who originally worked them in tapestry; also copies of two other heads from the same by Flaxman; and pictures by Watteau, Fuseli, Bird, Westall, Turner, Calcott, Hilton, etc. Here also is the beautiful alabaster sarcophagus of Seti I., father of Rameses II., which was discovered by Giovanni Belzoni, in 1817, in a royal tomb near Thebes. It was purchased by Sir John Soane from Mr. Salt, in 1824, for £2000. The entire collection cost its owner £50,000.

Several learned lawyers have lived on the south side of the Fields—two Lord Chancellors, Camden and Loughborough, Lord Chief Justice Kenyon, Sir Henry Gould, Serjeant Adair, etc.—and the houses Nos. 39 to 48 are occupied by the Royal College of Surgeons, which was originally built by Dance for the College, who removed here from their Hall on the site of the New Sessions House, Old Bailey, at their incorporation by Royal Charter in 1800. It was almost entirely rebuilt by Barry in 1835–37, when the stone front was extended from 84 to 108 feet. The interior contains two museums, a theatre, and a library. The museum, with Hunter's collection (purchased from his widow for £15,000 by the Government, and by them presented to the College) as a nucleus, was erected in 1836; and the College has since been enlarged by adding to it the site of the

Museum

Lincoln's Inn Theatre in 1848. The museum has some curious things in it : a fossil shell of a gigantic extinct armadillo ; fossil skeleton of the Mylodon, a large extinct sloth, from Buenos Ayres ; skeleton of a hippopotamus ; bones of the pelvis, tail, and left hindleg of the mighty Megatherium ; skeleton (8 feet high) of Charles O'Brian, the Irish giant, who died in 1783, aged 22 ; skeleton (20 inches high) of Caroline Crachani, the Sicilian dwarf, who died in 1824, aged 10 years ; plaster casts of the hands of Patrick Cotter, another Irish giant, 8 feet 7 inches high ; and hand of M. Louis, a French giant, 7 feet 4 inches high ; one of O'Brian's gloves ; plaster casts of bones of the extinct bird, the *Dinornis giganteus*, of New Zealand, which must have stood 10 feet high ; skeleton of the gigantic extinct deer, exhumed from beneath a peat bog near Limerick (span of antlers 8 feet, length of antler 7 feet 3 inches, height of skull 7 feet 6 inches) ; great penguin from the southernmost point touched by Sir James Ross ; skeleton of a giraffe ; skeleton of the elephant Chuneé, of whom we have read in connection with Exeter 'Change ; plaster cast of a young negro ; skeleton of a man who died from water on the brain, skull 48 inches in circumference ; skulls of a double-headed child, born in Bengal, who lived to be four years old, when it was killed by the bite of a cobra ; skeleton whose joints are ankylosed, or rendered immovable, by unnatural splints of bones growing out in all directions ; "The shaft case" ; the chest of a man impaled by the shaft of a chaise, the first tug hook also penetrating the chest, and wounding the left lung—the patient recovered, and survived the injury eleven years ; the preparation of the chest is side by side with the shaft ; iron pivot of a try sail which, in the London Docks, 26th February 1831, was driven through the body of John Taylor, a seaman, and passed obliquely

Old Time Aldwych

through the heart and left lung, pinning him to the deck—he was carried to the London Hospital, where he recovered in five months, so as to walk from the Hospital to the College and back again, and he ultimately returned to his duties as a seaman; wax cast of the band uniting the bodies of the Siamese twins. Among the mummies is the first wife of Martin van Butchell; also a sitting mummy, supposed to be of a Peruvian nobleman who immolated himself with his wife and child some centuries ago. The museum is open to fellows and members.

At the eastern end of the south side of Lincoln's Inn Fields is Serle Street, so called from Mr. Henry Serle, a Benchler of Lincoln's Inn who, according to Diprose, "built Serle Court, now called New Square, but formerly known as Little Lincoln's Inn Fields, and originally Fickets Field.¹ We also find he was engaged with a person named Clark, who had some claims upon the property which was settled by an agreement dated 34th year of Charles II. This fixed the property of the parties, and Mr. Serle was permitted to build on the field. He appears to have acquired much property in this neighbourhood, but ultimately became greatly involved, as the following extract from the *Autobiography of Sir John Bramston* will show:—

“In the beginning of the month of December, this yeare, 1690, among the notes of the House of Commons printed, I found an engrossed Bill sent down from the Lords for the transferring the estate of Mr. Henry Serle unto the Lord Chandos and Mr. Vincent, trustees for an infant, his heire, then out of England, for the payment of Mr. Serle by selling the lands. I was in the Bill concerned thus—There is a field by Lincoln's Inn, called Ficket Field, or by the most, and vulgarly Little

¹ See Agas' Map.

Serle Street

Lincoln's Inn Field. Sir John Birkenhead, the same person that in the war against Charles I. writ the *Mercurius Aulicus*, and after the return of King Charles II. was Master of Requests to His Majesty;—a man wittie, well learned, but he had some qualities not commendable,—he had purchased in fee some parts of a field called Ficket Field, and other parts he had a long lease of. He beinge indebted, and haveing some kindred of his name, he demises by will the said field to Randolph Birkenhead, and to Rupert Birkenhead and their heires, to the intent that they should pay his debts and legacies, and if they did not pay his debts and legacies within six months after his decease, or refuse to execute the trust, then he devised his lands to Sir Richard Mason and Francis Beamshon, Sergeant at Law, his executors, and their heires. Within the time the Birkenheads sell all the estate to Mr. Henry Serle, subject to Sir John's debts. He pays the debts and legacies. Soon after this Mr. Serle died intestate, much in debt, and his land all mortgaged.' ”

At the corner of Serle and Portugal Streets stood Serle's Coffee House, a great house of resort for young barristers, and is noticed by Addison in the *Spectator*, No. 49. It seems to have changed into a tavern or eating-house; for in the *Epicure's Almanack* for 1815 it is so described as being “kept by Mr. Hewitt, who takes constant care to have his larder well replenished, and his stock pots temptingly filled with excellent soup. The house and its accommodations are of the first order and respectability.”

This street did not get the name of “Portugal” until “Portugal Row” ceased to be known by that epithet, and was merged in the generic term of “Lincoln's Inn Fields.” Strype says of it: “On the Back Side of *Portugal Row* is a Street which runneth to *Lincoln's Inn*

Old Time Aldwych

Gate, which used to pass without a Name, but since the Place is increased by the new Buildings in *Little Lincoln's Inn Fields*, and the settling of the Play House, it may have a Name given to it, and not improperly, Play House Street." But, although this was a good suggestion, it did not take effect; and perhaps this was lucky; for, after the disappearance of the theatre, if renamed after its principal building, it might have been called "Bankruptcy Street," after the Court which was therein.

No one can tell the story of "the Duke's Theatre," as it was called, better than John Downes, who in his advice "To the Reader" in his *Roscius Anglicanus*, says: "The Editor of the ensuing Relation, being long Conversant with the Plays and Actors of the Original Company, under the Patent of Sir *William Davenant*, at his Theatre in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, Opened there 1662. And as Bookkeeper¹ and Prompter, continued so, till October 1706. He writing out all the Parts in each Play; and attending every Morning to the Actors' Rehearsals, and their performances in Afternoons."² He goes on to say: "In the Reign of King *Charles the First*, there were Six Play Houses allowed in Town: The *Black Fryars* Company, His Majesty's Servants; The *Bull* in *St. John's Street*; another in *Salisbury Court*; another called the *Fortune*; another at the *Globe*; and the Sixth at the Cock Pit in *Drury Lane*; all which continued Acting till the beginning of the Civil Wars. The scattered Remnant of several of these Houses, upon King *Charles's* Restoration, Train'd a Company, who Acted again at the Bull, and Built them a New House in *Gibbon's Tennis Court*, in *Clare Market*; in which Two

¹ *Bookkeeper* means here, not one who keeps accounts, but the person who is entrusted with and holds a Book of the Play, in order to furnish the performers with written parts, and to prompt them when necessary.

² Theatres then began at 3 p.m.

The Duke's Theatre

Places they continued Acting all 1660, 1661, 1662, and part of 1663. . . . *Sir William Davenant* gain'd a Patent from the King, and created *Mr. Betterton*, and all the rest of *Rhodes's* Company, the King's Servants, who were Sworn by my Lord *Manchester*, then Lord Chamberlain, to serve his Royal Highness the Duke of *York* at the Theatre in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*. . . . *Sir William Davenant's* Women Actresses were *Mrs. Davenport*, *Saunderson*, *Davies*, *Long*, *Ann Gibbs*, *Norris*, *Holden*, *Jennings*. Note, The first Four, being his principal Actresses, he boarded them at his own House. His Company being now compleat, *Sir William*, in order to prepare Plays to open his Theatre, it being then a-building in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, rehearsed the First and Second Part of the Siege of *Rhodes*, and the *Wits*¹ at *Apothecaries Hall*; and in Spring 1662, opened his House with the said Plays, having new Scenes and Decorations, being the first time that e'en were introduced in England.² *Mr. Betterton* acted *Solyman* the Magnificent; *Mr. Harris*, *Alfonso*; *Mr. Lilliston*, *Villerius*, the Grand Master; *Mr. Blagden*, the Admiral; *Mrs. Davenport*, *Roxalana*; *Mrs. Saunderson*, *Ianthe*. All Parts being justly and excellently performed, it continued acting 12 days without interruption, with great applause. The next was *The Wits*: the Part of the elder *Palatine* performed by *Mr. Betterton*; the younger *Palatine*, by *Mr. Harris*; *Sir Morglay Thwack*, by *Mr. Underhill*; *Lady Ample*, by *Mrs. Davenport*. All the other Parts being exactly Performed, it continued 8 days acting successively. The Tragedy of *Hamlet*, *Hamlet* being performed by *Mr. Betterton*; *Sir William* (having seen *Mr. Taylor*, of the *Black Fryars* Company, act it; who being instructed by the Author *Mr. Shakespear*) taught *Mr. Betterton* in every particle of it, gain'd him esteem and

¹ Both by D'Avenant.

² He means, in a public theatre.

Old Time Aldwych

reputation superlative to all other plays. No succeeding Tragedy, for several Years, got more reputation or money to the Company than this."

Then follows a long list of the plays acted. "These being the principal, which we call Stock plays, that they acted from the time they open'd the Theatre in 1662 to the beginning of May 1665, at which time the *Plague* began to rage, the Company ceas'd acting till the *Christmas* after the Fire in 1666. . . . The Company ending as I said with *Mustapha*,¹ in May 1665, after a year and a half's discontinuance they, by Command, began with the same play again at Court, the Christmas after the Fire, and from thence continued again to act at their Theatre in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*."

We see that they acted by command at Court. Downes tells a curious story of another Royal Command. "This play² had wonderful success, being acted 12 days together, when our Company were commanded to *Dover* in May 1670. The King with all his Court meeting his sister, the Duchess of *Orleans* there. This Comedy and *Sir Solomon Single*, pleas'd Madam the Duchess and the whole Court extremely. The *French* Court wearing then excessive short lac'd Coats; some scarlet, some blew, with broad wast belts; Mr. *Nokes* having at that time one shorter than the *French* fashion, to act *Sir Archer Addle*³ in; the Duke of *Monmouth* gave Mr. *Nokes* his Sword and Belt from his side, and buckled it on himself, on purpose to ape the French; that Mr. *Nokes* looked more like a drest up Ape than a *Sir Arthur*; which upon his first entrance on the stage, put the King and Court to an excessive laughter; at which the *French* look'd very Shaggrin, to see themselves ap'd by such

¹ By the Earl of Orrery.

² *The Sullen Lovers*; or, *The Impertinents*, by Shadwell.

³ I cannot find this character in the *Dramatis Personæ* of the 1668 edition.

D'Avenant's Funeral

a buffoon as Sir *Arthur*. Mr. *Nokes* kept the Duke's sword to his dying day."

The Duke's Theatre was drawing to a close, for at the time of Sir William's death (7th April 1668) a new theatre was being built for his company at Dorset Gardens. He died at his lodgings in Lincoln's Inn Theatre, and being poet laureate, he had a fine funeral. Pepys says: "9 Ap. 1668. I up, and down to the Duke of York's play house, there to see, which I did, Sir W. Davenant's corpse carried out towards Westminster, there to be buried. Here were many coaches and six horses, and many hacknies, that made it look, methought, as if it were the buriall of a poor poet. He seemed to have many children, by five or six in the first mourning coach, all boys." Downes thus chronicles the event: "*The Man's the Master*, wrote by Sir William Davenant, being the last play he ever wrote, he dying presently after, and was bury'd in *Westminster Abbey*, near Mr. Chaucer's monument, our whole Company attending his funeral. Note, This was the last new play that was acted in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*. . . . The new Theatre in Dorset Garden being finished, and our Company, after Sir William's death, being under the rule and dominion of his widow, the *Lady Davenant*, Mr. *Betterton*, and Mr. *Harris* (Mr. *Charles Davenant*, her son acting for her), they removed from *Lincoln's Inn Fields* thither; and, on the 9th day of November 1671, they opened their new theatre with Sir *Martin Marall*,¹ which continued three days together, with a full audience each day, notwithstanding it had been acted 30 days before in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, and above 4 times at Court."

Pepys went to the Duke's Theatre very frequently, and thus records seeing it soon after the opening night:

¹ By Dryden, but much borrowed from Moliere *Etourdi* and Quinault's *Amant Indiscret*.

Old Time Aldwych

"July 2. Went to Sir William Davenant's Opera; this being the fourth day that it hath begun, and the first that I have seen it. To day was acted the second part of 'the Siege of Rhodes.' We staid a very great while for the King and the Queen of Bohemia; and by the breaking of a board over our heads, we had a great deal of dust fall into the ladies' necks and the men's haire, which made good sport. The King being come, the scene opened; which indeed is very fine and magnificent, and well acted, all but the Eunuche, who was so much out that he was hissed off the stage."

But Pepys remembered the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, before D'Avenant's time, for he says under date 20th November 1660: "Mr. Shipley and I to the new play house near Lincoln's Inn Fields (which was formerly Gibbon's tennis court) where the play of 'Beggar's Bush'¹ was newly begun, and so went in, and saw it well acted; and here I saw, for the first time, one Moone,² who is said to be the best actor in the world, lately come over with the King; and, indeed, it is the finest play house, I believe, that ever was in England." "3 Jan. 1661. To the Theatre, where was acted 'Beggar's Bush,' it being very well done; and here the first time that ever I saw women come upon the stage."

Pepys finds much fault with D'Avenant's theatre, with the plays, the actors, and the audience: "27 Dec. 1662. Not so well pleased with the company at the house to day, which was full of citizens—there being hardly a gallant man, or woman in the house." "2 Jan. 1663. The house was full of citizens, and so the less pleasant, but that I was willing to make an end of my gaddings." There was a rascally cheat and adventuress who went by the name of the German Princess, and who accepted an engagement at the Duke's Theatre. "15

¹ By Beaumont and Fletcher.

² Mohun, the celebrated actor.

Pepys

Ap. 1664. To the Duke's house, and there saw 'The German Princesse' acted by the woman herself; but never was anything so well done in earnest, worse performed in jest upon the Stage. And, indeed, the whole play, abating the drollery of him that acts her husband, is very simple, unless, here and there, a witty sprinkle or two." "4 Feb. 1667. Soon as dined, my wife and I out to the Duke's play house, and there saw 'Heraclius,'¹ an excellent play, to my extraordinary content; and the more from the house being very full, and great company; among others, Mrs. Stewart, very fine, with her locks done up with puffles, as my wife calls them; and several other great ladies had their hair so, though I do not like it; but my wife do mightily, but it is only because she sees it is the fashion. Here I saw my Lord Rochester and his lady, Mrs. Mallet, who hath, after all this ado, married him; and, as I hear some say in the pit, it is a great act of charity, for he hath no estate. But it was pleasant to see how everybody rose up when my Lord John Butler, the Duke of Ormond's son, came into the pit towards the end of the play, who was a servant to Mrs. Mallet, and now smiled upon her, and she on him. I had sitting next to me, a woman, the likest my Lady Castlemaine that ever I saw anybody like another; but she is acquainted with every fine fellow, and called them by their name, Jacke and Tom, and before the end of the play frisked to another place." "7 March 1667. To the Duke's play house, and saw 'The English Princesse, or Richard the Third';² a most sad, melancholy play, and pretty good; but nothing eminent in it, as some tragedies are; only little Miss Davis³ did dance a jig after the end of the play, and there telling the next day's play; so that it comes in by force only to please

¹ A translation from Corneille.

² By J. Caryl.

³ Afterwards mistress to Charles II.

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the company to see her dance in boy's clothes; and, the truth is, there is no comparison between Nell's dancing the other day at the King's house in boy's clothes and this, this being infinitely beyond the other." "1 Jan. 1678. Thence I, after dinner, to the Duke of York's play house, and there saw 'Sir Martin Mar-all'; which I have seen so often, and yet am mightily pleased with it, and think mighty witty, and the fullest of proper matter for mirth that ever was writ; and I do clearly see that they do improve in their acting of it. Here a mighty company of citizens, prentices and others; and it makes me observe, that when I began first to be able to bestow a play upon myself, I do not remember that I saw so many, by half, of the ordinary prentice and mean people in the pit at 2s. 6d. a-piece as now; I going for several years no higher than the 12d., and then the 18d. places, though I strained hard to go in when I did; so much the vanity and prodigality of the age is to be observed in this particular." One more excerpt and I will close Pepys' reminiscences of this theatre: "21 Dec. 1668. Thence to the Duke's play house and saw 'Macbeth.' The King and Court there; and we sat just under them and my Lady Castlemaine, and close to a woman that comes into the pit, a kind of a loose gossip, that pretends to be like her, and is so, something. And my wife, by my truth, appeared, I think, as pretty as any of them; I never thought so much before; and so did Talbot and W. Hewer, as, I heard, they said to one another. The King and Duke of York minded me, and smiled upon me, at the handsome woman near me; but it vexed me to see Moll Davis, in the box over the King's, and my Lady Castlemaine's, look down upon the King, and he up to her; and so did my Lady Castlemaine once, to see who it was; but, when she saw Moll Davis, she looked like fire; which troubled me." As far

Evelyn

as I can see, staid Evelyn only mentions this theatre once in his Diary: "25 Jan. 1661. After divers years since I had seen any play, I went to see acted 'The Scornful Lady'¹ at a new theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields."

¹ By Beaumont and Fletcher.

CHAPTER XXIV

Drury Lane Theatre burnt—Union of the two Companies—A Split between them—A New Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields—Removal to the Haymarket—Rich builds a New Theatre—*The Beggar's Opera*—Riot in the Theatre—Decline and Sale of the Theatre—Joe Miller and his Tombstone—King's College Hospital—"The Old Curiosity Shop"—The "Pop Gun Plot"—The "Black Jack."

THE King's Company at Drury Lane were burnt out in January 1672, and removed to the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which had been vacant since the previous November. They opened on 26th February 1672, with the play of *Wit without Money*, one of Beaumont and Fletcher's best. They played here till the end of the 1673 season, and went into their newly built theatre on 26th March 1674. That in Lincoln's Inn Fields reverted to its old condition of a tennis court. In 1682 the two companies of the King's and the Duke's united, and the latter was removed immediately from Dorset Gardens to the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. But though united, they were not happy, for Downes tells us that in 1695, "a difference happening between the United Patentees and the chief Actors, as Mr. *Betterton*, Mrs. *Barry*, and Mrs. *Bracegirdle*; the latter complaining of oppression from the former; they for redress appealed to my Lord of *Dorset*, then Lord Chamberlain, for justice: who, espousing the cause of the Actors, with the assistance of Sir *Robert Howard*, finding their complaints just, procured from King *William*, a separate License for Mr. *Congreve*, Mr. *Betterton*, Mrs. *Bracegirdle*, Mrs. *Barry*, and others, to set up a new Company, calling it The New

The Duke's Theatre

Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields; and the House being fitted up from a Tennis Court, they opened it the last day of April 1695, with a new Comedy, call'd *Love for Love*, wrote by Mr. Congreve."

The accompanying illustration of the proscenium and



STAGE OF THE DUKE'S THEATRE.

stage of the Duke's Theatre is unfortunately not dated, but it bears internal evidence of being of Charles Second's time. It is taken from an interleaved Pennant's *Account of London*, in the Print Department, British Museum.

But it would seem as if this theatre was doomed to

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misfortune; for before ten years of occupation it was found to be a bad property. Colley Cibber gives some reasons, probably the right ones, for this. He says: "To this Decline of the Old Company, many Accidents might contribute; as the too distant Situation of their Theatre; or their want of a better, for it was not then in the condition it now is; but small, and poorly fitted up, within the Walls of a Tennis *Quaree* Court, which is of the lesser sort. *Booth*, who was then a young Actor among them, has often told me of the difficulties *Betterton* then laboured under, and complain'd of: How impracticable he found it to keep their Body to that common Order, which was necessary for their Support; of their relying too much upon their intrinsick Merit; and, though but few of them were young, even when they first became their own Masters, yet they were all, now, ten Years older, and, consequently, more liable to fall into an inactive Negligence, or were only separately diligent, for themselves, in the sole Regard of their Benefit Plays; which several of their Principals knew, at worst, would raise them Contributions, that would more than tolerably subsist them for the current Year. . . . To recover them therefore, to their due Estimation, a new Project was formed, of building them a stately Theatre, in the *Haymarket*, by Sir *John Vanbrugh*, for which he rais'd a Subscription of thirty Persons of Quality, at one hundred Pounds each, in Consideration whereof, every Subscriber, for his own Life, was to be admitted to whatever Entertainments should be publickly perform'd there, without further payment for his Entrance. Of this Theatre, I saw the first Stone laid, on which was inscribed *The little Whig*, in honour to a Lady of extraordinary Beauty, then the celebrated Toast, and Pride of that Party. In the Year 1706, when this House was finished, *Betterton* and his Co-partners dissolv'd their

Rich

own Agreement, and threw themselves under the Direction of Sir *John Vanbrugh* and Mr. *Congreve*; imagining, perhaps, that the Conduct of two such eminent Authors might give a more prosperous Turn to their Condition." The old company acted there, for the last time, on 20th October 1705.

Christopher Rich, a theatrical manager, formerly an attorney, acquired, at a low rent, a lease, with the patent granted by Charles II., of the deserted theatre, which he pulled down, and on its site built a new theatre, his architect being James Shepherd, who also built the play-house in Goodman's Fields. Before this was quite finished, Rich died, 4th November 1714, leaving the building to be opened by his sons Christopher and John. The latter opened the theatre on 18th December, and spoke the prologue of the opening play (*Farquhar's Recruiting Officer*), dressed in mourning. According to Davies, in his *Dramatic Miscellanies*, "Lincoln's Inn Fields House was finely decorated. The Scenes were new. The Stage was more extended than that of the rival theatre, and superbly adorned with looking-glass on both sides of the Stage; a circumstance which Quin said was an excellent trap to catch actresses who admired their persons more than their profession of acting. But, when the novelty was worn away, the audiences forsook the new company for their old friends at Drury Lane."

This was not absolutely true, for Rich was able to keep on the theatre till 1732-33, when he migrated to the new house he had built in Bow Street, Covent Garden; and besides it was here, on 29th January 1728, he produced Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, which had been refused at Drury Lane. This was a success indeed, and one of which it was said at the time that it made "Gay Rich, and Rich Gay." He obtained a guard of soldiers at

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the theatre, similar to that at Drury Lane, and the following is the story of it. On 1st February 1721, during the performance of *Macbeth*, a disturbance took place. Rich politely expressed his intention to stop a drunken nobleman who sought to cross the stage while the play was in progress, and received a box on the ears, which he promptly returned. He was thereupon attacked by the companions of his assailant. But Quin, Ryan, and other actors gathered round him, and the aristocratic party rushed into the body of the house, slashing the hangings with their swords, breaking the sconces, and doing so much damage that the theatre had to be closed for a couple of days. The offenders were expelled by the watchmen, whom Quin had summoned; and the King, on the application of Rich, granted a guard to attend the theatre.

After Rich left the theatre it was let for Italian operas, oratorios, balls, concerts, and exhibitions; it even was used as a barrack and an auction room; then it was occupied by Spode and Copeland as a china repository, and as such is shown in this illustration; and, finally, the premises were sold in August 1848 to the Royal College of Surgeons, and pulled down, so that their museum could be enlarged. Mr. Timbs says: "Of the theatre little remained, save the outer walls, built upon an arched cellar: there was a large Queen Anne staircase, a saloon upon the first floor; and the attic, lighted by windows in the roof, was probably the scene-painting loft."

Where King's College Hospital now stands was a burial-ground belonging to St. Clement Danes, but long disused. In it was buried the mortal remains of the actor, Joe Miller, who was reputed to have been the author of a multitude of jests, which are said to have been collected by John Mottley. The first edition contains 247 witticisms; the number had increased to

Joe Miller

273 in the third edition published in the same year, and they grew with each succeeding edition, until one published in New York in 1865 had as many as 1286: so that it is very evident that very many of them are apocryphal. The full title of the rare first edition is: "Joe Miller's Jests: or the Wit's Vade Mecum. Being a collection of the most Brilliant Jests; the Politest Repartees; the most Elegant Bon-Mots, and most



LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS THEATRE—1847.

pleasant short Stories in the English Language. First carefully collected in the company, and many of them transcribed from the mouth of the Facetious Gentleman whose name they bear; and now set forth and published by his lamentable friend and former companion, Elijah Jenkins, Esquire. Most Humbly Inscribed to those Choice Spirits of the Age, Captain Bodens, Mr. Alexander Pope, Mr. Professor Lacy, Mr. Orator Henley, and Job Baker, the Kettle Drummer. London. Printed and

King's College Hospital

If humour, wit and honesty could save
The humorous, witty, honest, from the grave,
This grave had not so soon its tenant found,
With honesty, and wit, and humour crown'd.
Or could esteem and love preserve our breath,
And guard us longer from the stroke of Death.
The stroke of Death on him had later fell,
Whom all mankind esteem'd and loved so well.

S. DUCK.

"From respect to social worth, mirthfull qualities, and histrionic excellence, commemorated by poetic talent in humble life.

"The above Inscription, which Time had nearly obliterated, has been preserved and transferred to this stone by order of Mr. JARVIS BUCK, Churchwarden. A.D. 1816."

I do not know whether this tombstone is still in existence.

King's College Hospital was established in 1839 for the sick poor, and to afford practical instruction to the medical students of King's College under the superintendence of their own professors. It has been greatly enlarged, but becoming insanitary according to modern opinion, and its *raison d'être* being modified by the vast demolition which had occurred in its districts, it was determined by the authorities both of King's College and the Hospital, at a meeting held on 12th October 1903, to apply to Parliament for powers to sell the present site, and remove the Hospital to some part of South London, where it was more required.

Opposite the Hospital is, or rather was, Portsmouth Street, leading into Lincoln's Inn Fields. A very miserable-looking house, No. 7, gave itself out to be the original "Old Curiosity Shop" of Dickens, a self-assertion in no ways warranted by the text of the novel. And yet people were found to believe it, and even write and publish such fairy tales as the following, taken from the

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People of 26th July 1903:—"London is to lose another show place. The building in Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, which is said to have been the original of 'The Old Curiosity Shop' immortalised by Dickens, has been sold to an American, who will, eventually, take it to pieces, and re-erect it in the States. Thousands have paid for the privilege of seeing the venerable edifice, and purchasing Dickens' curios, caring little whether the house written about by the master novelist really existed there, or, as many suppose, in Fetter Lane."

Connected with this street was the "Pop Gun Plot," of which, I fancy, very few of my readers have ever heard, and which is dismissed in the *Annual Register* in the following contemptuous terms:—"29 Sep. 1794. The Privy Council was convened for the examination of a plot said to have been entered into by some insignificant young men, for the purpose of taking away the life of our gracious sovereign." Toone, in his *Chronological History*, says: "29 Sep. A Privy Council was convened for the purpose of examining into the truth of a plot said to have been entered into, for taking away the life of the King by means of an air gun; a warrant was issued to apprehend P. T. Lemaitre, and Wm. Higgins, the persons supposed to be implicated in the plot." Lemaitre afterwards wrote a history of his apprehension and short imprisonment, but it is diffuse and egotistical; and, as Mr. Diprose has given a very fair résumé of the affair, I reproduce it, merely correcting a few errors: "This street was, at the close of the last century, the scene of the celebrated sensational, yet pretended 'Pop Gun Plot,' a plot to kill the King by means of an air gun and poisoned arrow! It appears the unsettled state of the country caused a plan to be published in 1793, to bring about 'The British Convention of Delegates of the People, associated to obtain Universal

The "Pop Gun Plot"

Suffrage and Annual Parliaments,' in which plan the 'London Corresponding Society' and the 'Constitutional Society' were deeply interested. The 'Convention,' however, was never held—for Thomas Hardy, the Secretary of the first-named Society, and eleven others, were prosecuted for high treason. Of these, Hardy, John Horne Tooke, and John Thelwell were tried and acquitted, while Parliament, on the 23rd of May 1794, passed an 'Act to empower His Majesty to secure and detain such persons as His Majesty shall suspect are conspiring against his person and Government.' It is not our purpose to enter fully into the well-known sensational character of those times; suffice it to say that one John Smith, of Portsmouth Street, and George Higgins were duly arrested on the charge of high treason, examined repeatedly by the Privy Council, and ultimately discharged; but another member of the society, the unfortunate Paul Thomas Lemaitre, aged 18, appears to have suffered the worst. Arrested while working as a gold watch-case maker at his cousin's house, 13 Denmark Street, Soho, he was charged with 'treasonable practices,' as being a 'delegate' of the 'London Corresponding Society,' and as being in connection with Smith, to assassinate the King by means of an air gun. Arrested on Saturday evening, the 27th of September 1794, he was, for the next three days, closely examined by the Privy Council; was, on the evidence of a *forged letter*, and one Thomas Upton (who had sworn to be revenged upon him for seconding him, Upton being turned out of the society), imprisoned, being the *first* person sent to the new prison at Cold Bath Fields; was kept confined within this 'British Bastille,' as he called it, for thirty-two weeks (during which time his mother had died of grief), and finally liberated on the 9th of May 1795, on giving bail, himself in £200, and two others of £50 each. As he said in

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his pamphlet, 'I was carried before the Privy Council, and examined by a set of men supposed, from their stations, to be much superior to their neighbours; after this, I had been confined in dismal cells, been subject to the tyranny of a gaoler, and charged with the guilt of High Treason. All this appeared like a tale in the Arabian Nights. I was to have killed the King with a poisoned arrow. Fools! What poison have we efficacious enough for this purpose? What chance could I have of taking aim at the person of the first magistrate? What end would it answer to take away his life? George the Fourth would have succeeded George the Third; and, feeling as great detestation as any person at the idea of assassinating a fellow-creature, I know not of any motive to induce me to drive the sovereign from his throne before his time.' Some months after, he was unnecessarily summoned before the Privy Council, and, after more delay, was, with John Smith (whom he knew 'as a member of the Society, and one of whom I have frequently bought pamphlets, &c.') and George Higgins, tried at the Old Bailey, 11 May 1796, and discharged. This, then, was the result of the 'plot,' but poor Lemaitre's case was for years before Parliament: various members endeavoured to get him redress, among whom Henry Warburton got a petition drawn up for him so lately as August 1846, and Lord Dacre acknowledged in a letter to Warburton, as having 'for nearly half a century, with others of the early Reformers, defended and assisted Mr. Lemaitre, and advocated his cause.'"

Just round the corner from Lincoln's Inn Fields was a famous public-house known as the "Black Jack," a noted place of resort of Joe Miller and his boon companions. It also was called "The Jumps," from a tradition that Jack Sheppard leaped from a first floor window to escape capture. It was here that the Cato Street conspirators

The "Black Jack"

held their meetings. It is needless to say that the sign was taken from the leather pitcher, called a *Black Jack*. Mr. E. L. Blanchard, in an article under the title of



THE "BLACK JACK."

"London Amusements" in the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* of 19th April 1872, says of this public-house that "It was once kept by a relation of Macklin's

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mother, and here Macklin, afterwards so celebrated as Shylock, 'the Jew that Shakspeare drew,' officiated as waiter. George Frederick Cooke and the old actors of Drury Lane were habitually to be found here after the performances. One of the most singular frequenters of the parlour was a man named Bibb, who had been brought up as an engraver, but who had displayed little industry in his profession. His father left him an annuity, which was to be paid at the rate of two guineas a week, and never to be advanced beyond that sum. This amount was, however, generally dissipated the day it was received ; and he would then sit on the steps of the house belonging to his sister, who had married an eminent merchant, until the crowd that collected compelled a compliance with his requests for a further sum." He was called " Half Crown Bibb," and was the original of the character of Jeremy Diddler, and died on the night that the farce of *Raising the Wind* was produced.

CHAPTER XXV

Clare Market—The Butchers—A Wolf killed—Fall of two Houses—
The “Sun” Tavern—Story of Rich—The “Fountain”—A Man
gambles away his Hair—The “Hope” Tavern and its Concerts
—Portrait of Jack Sheppard—The “Bull Head” and the Artists’
Club—The “Spiller’s Head”—“The Shepherd and his Flock
Club.”

LET us wend our way to what was once Clare Market, the earliest mention of which, perhaps, is by James Howel, in his *Londinopolis* (1657): “Behind Lincoln’s Inn, Westward, is a spacious field, where many fair houses, or rather, palaces, are taken up by the Gentry. There is there towards Drewry Lane, a New Market called Clare Market; there is there a street and Palace of the same name, built by the Earl of Clare, who lives there in a princely manner, having a house, a street, and a market, both for fish and flesh, all bearing his name.” It seems that there is no engraving extant of this once splendid place. It is known that it was a large and stately mansion, that it was shut in by a high wall, and that its grounds stood on the north-eastern side of those of Craven House, and adjoined them. All the streets were built by the Earl of Clare, and bore the family names of Clare, Denzil, Holles, and Vere. By the time Hatton’s book came to be written, in 1708, a notification is given—“Clare House, now Tenements.” From this it would seem that it was under the fourth Earl’s (John Holles) administration of the property that the grand mansion was deserted, probably about the time of migration to Newcastle House, Lincoln’s Inn Fields.

Old Time Aldwych

Charles I., in 1640, granted his licence to Thomas York, his executors, etc., to erect as many buildings as they thought fit upon St. Clement's Inn Field, the inheritance of the Earl of Clare, "to be built on each side the causeway, leading from Gibbon's Bowling Alley (or Tennis Court) at the coming out of Lincoln's Inn Fields, to the Rein Deer Yard, that leadeth unto Drury Lane, not to exceed, on either side, the number of 120 feet in length, or front, and 60 feet in breadth, to be of stone or brick." The same King issued another licence in 1642, permitting Gervase Hollis, Esq., to erect fifteen houses, a chapel, and to make several streets of the width of 30, 34, and 40 feet. By the same Act, already quoted, which gave Cowper and his colleagues power to build in Lincoln's Inn Fields, it sets forth that, "in respect of the great charge which John, Earl of Clare, hath been at in erecting several new buildings (now Clare Market), upon his inheritance in Clement's Inn Fields, &c., usefull for an open and free Market," it was enacted that a market should be held there thrice weekly, and that the Earl shall enjoy all the emoluments thereunto appertaining.

Noorthouck thus mentions the market: "On the north side of Lyon's Inn stands Clare Market, which derives its name from John, Earl of Clare, who built and opened this market in the year 1656: it was declared to be a free market by an Act of Cromwell's Parliament; being excepted in one of the provisionary clauses of the Act against new buildings. This market contains two market houses; and is one of the best markets in town for all kinds of provisions." But this market was not established without some difficulty, as we learn from *Harl. MS.* 5900: "The City and my Lord had a great lawsuit, which lasted many years, to the great expence of the City; but, from the inequity of the times, the

Clare Market

City and my Lord agreed, and gave it up to the Lord ; and now it is become one of the greatest markets in the adjacent parts ; and, from the success of this noble Lord, they have got several charters for the erecting of several others since the year 1660 ; as that of St. James', by the Earl of St. Albans : Bloomsbury, by the Earl of Southampton : Brook Market, by the Lord Brook : Hungerford Market : Newport Market : besides the Haymarket, New Charing Cross, and that at Petty France at Westminster ; with their Mayfair, in the fields behind Piccadilly."

Strype says of it : "Clare Market, very considerable, and well served with provisions, both flesh and fish ; for, besides the butchers in the shambles, it is much resorted unto by the country butchers and higglers. The market days are Wednesdays and Saturdays. The Toll belongs to the Duke of Newcastle, as ground landlord thereof." And another authority, which I cannot verify, tells us that "The Duke of Newcastle built a Chapel at the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields, near Clare Market, for the use of the butchers. There are about twenty-six butchers in and about Clare Market, who slaughter from 350 to 400 sheep weekly, in the market stalls and cellars. There is one place only in which bullocks are slaughtered. The number killed is from 50 to 60 weekly, but considerably more in winter, amounting occasionally to 200. The number of calves is very uncertain. Near the market is a tripe house, in which they boil and clean the tripes, feet, heads, &c. In a yard distinct from the more public portion of the market, is the place where the Jews slaughter their cattle, according to a ceremony prescribed by the laws of their religion. Here great attention is paid to cleanliness."

The butchers were an extremely lively lot, and we have to thank Hone for a graphic description of them.

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Anent the keeping up the 5th of November, he says: "In such times, the burning of 'a *good* Guy' was a scene of uproar unknown to the present day. The bonfire in Lincoln's Inn Fields was of this superior order of disorder. It was made at the Great Queen Street Corner, immediately opposite Newcastle House. Fuel came all day long, in carts, properly guarded against surprise: old people have remembered when upwards of two hundred cartloads were brought to make and feed this bonfire, and more than thirty 'Guys' were burnt upon gibbets between eight and twelve o'clock at night. At the same period the butchers in Clare Market had a bonfire in the open space of the Market, next to Bear Yard, and they thrashed each other 'round about the wood fire,' with the strongest sinews of slaughtered bulls. Large parties of butchers from all the markets paraded the streets, ringing peals from marrow-bones and cleavers, so loud as to overpower the storms of sound that came from the rocking belfries of the churches. By ten o'clock London was so lit up by bonfires and fireworks, that, from the suburbs it looked in one red heat. Many were the overthrows of horsemen and carriages, from the discharging of hand-rockets, and the pressure of moving mobs inflamed to violence by drink, and fighting their way against each other."

But a curious fact about these rough butchers was that, being situated so near two theatres, they took a deep and lively interest in them, cramming the galleries, and with their sweet breaths applauding or damning a piece; they were a factor that had to be reckoned with in theatrical management. Then, again, unless bought off, they discoursed sweet music with marrow-bones and cleavers on the occasion of any marriage in the neighbourhood: we have seen a specimen of their rough play, at Butcher's Row, in "The Beaux Disaster," in which

Clare Market

illustration we may notice their dogs, which they kept for bull-baiting, fighting, etc. They served a useful purpose once, at all events, for, in the *Gent's Mag.* of 1773, we read: "July 24. A large wolf broke loose from a menagerie in Piccadilly, and, without doing any mischief, ran as far as Clare Market, where he was killed by the butchers' dogs." The *Annual Register* for 1796 tells of a sad accident in this neighbourhood: "27 June. The following melancholy accident happened yesterday morning in Houghton Street, Clare Market:—Two houses suddenly gave way, and buried in their ruins sixteen unfortunate inhabitants. At noon, thirteen were got out, and conveyed to the parish workhouse in Portugal Street. Of these, three had been dug out, shockingly mangled, without the least symptoms of life: two children, apparently dead, were restored to life by the means prescribed by the Humane Society in cases of suffocation; the rest received, some of them slight and others severe contusions. But what rendered their situation the more deplorable was that they recognised, or expected to recognise, in every individual who was brought in, a relative or a friend. The landlord of one of the houses, it is reported, received notice of the insecurity of his house two days ago, but did not apprise the lodgers of their danger, for fear of losing them."

There were many public-houses in this neighbourhood, and many a tale or legend is reported of them. Take, for instance, the "Sun" Tavern, formerly No. 12 Clare Street, in connection with which a story is told of Rich, the theatrical manager, who played Harlequin under the name of Lunn. Returning one evening from the theatre, he instructed the hackney coachman to drive him to the "Sun." As the coachman was pulling up, Rich sprang through the coach window and through the open window of the tavern parlour! The driver had

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now pulled up, and, having let down the step, he was astonished to find the vehicle empty. After cursing his fare for a bilker, he remounted the box, and was about to drive off, when Rich, who had, meantime, jumped back again, ordered him to turn and set him down, which he did, with no very pleasant ideas of his customer. The latter, on alighting in an ordinary manner, began to rail at the coachman for being so very stupid, and offered him the fare. This he declined, saying that his master had ordered him not to take any money that night. Rich hereupon observed that his master must be a fool, and made an offer of a shilling to the coachman, who, meantime, had regained his seat on the box, but he still declined to take anything, adding, "I know you well, notwithstanding your shoes, and so, Mr. Devil, you are outwitted for once."

The "Fountain," No. 4 Clare Street, can boast some antiquity; there is a trade token extant relating to the house when one Richard Andrews was the landlord. Later, in 1742, the proprietor was Edward Webb, who appears to have been most unfortunate as to his property, for in that year there are two advertisements in the *Daily Advertiser* relative to goods stolen from him. On 28th May he offers two guineas reward for a silver quart pot stolen, weighing 25 oz. 2 dwts. 12 grs., having engraved round the bottom, "Edward Webb, at the Fountain in Clare Street, Clare Market." And on 3rd July he laments the loss of a gold box and case, weighing ten ounces and a half, and a silver case, chased, with which a watch-case maker in Grub Street, to whom he had entrusted them for repairs, had absconded. Mr. Diprose is responsible for the following:—"The 'Fountain,' in Clare Street, is now conducted by Mr. Gaffer in a most respectable manner, but was, about forty years ago, a regular crack house for gamblers and sporting men,

The "Hope" Tavern

kept by Sy. Nightingale. At this time it was used by 'Duckey Fowler,' the great cribbage player, 'Goodey Levy' of the *Running Rein* notoriety, 'Ben Warwick,' and all the sporting and betting men of the parish, and in and about London. Another name we may mention was 'Shock Jim,' who played a man at this house for all he possessed, and won; he then played him for the hair of his head; he again won, and an eye-witness assures us he saw 'Shock Jim' gnawing it off."

I must quote the same authority for the following:—
"There flourished, at one time, in Blackmoor Street, the celebrated 'Hope Tavern Concert,' whereat figured some of the professional vocal stars of the first magnitude. The noted Miss Toplis, and that scion of Comus, Bill Percy, here delighted auditors with their mirth-provoking, side-cracking comic duets and humorous mimicry. Here Miss Frazier James, the fascinating Queen of Song, 'poured forth her native wood notes wild.' Ladies of the first water might be seen here nightly, under the escort of some dashing scion of a noble house—some belted knight or esquire of high degree—many of whom were wont to pass their midnight vigils at this famed chanting saloon. Here also did that versatile and facetious 'Bob Glindon' open out his capacious comic budget, and rattle forth his 'gibs,' his 'jibes,' his 'quidets,' and his 'qualits,' and was 'wont to keep the table in a roar' by his never ending and ever varying funniments of fiction, chiefly all newly uttered coin from 'Brain Mint,' in conjunction with many other worthies of the same class, who bravely and dashingly kept up the fame and reputation of the Hope Saloon. Mine Host strictly adhered to the old motto of 'No Song, no Supper.' After the singing, the company repaired to the supper room, and finished by chanting, 'We won't go home till morning, till daylight does appear!' This was carried out to the letter; so that,

Old Time Aldwych

after a riotous debauch in spinning out the night, they reeled 'home with the milk in the morning.' . . . A singular story appeared in most of the newspapers in 1845, setting forth that Mr. Smith, the proprietor of the 'Hope Tavern' in Blackmoor Street, Clare Market, had in his possession the portraits, painted by Thornhill, of Jack Sheppard and his mother; and sold them, a few days since, to Mr. Merivale, of Gray's Inn, for ninety-seven guineas. In removing the portrait of Jack's progenitor from its frame, there was found, below the moulding, seven guineas, together with a number of copper coins of the period. Put thus accidentally upon the scent of some of Jack's secrets, it was an easy inference that it might be worth while to make a careful examination of the other frame, which besides was of a suspicious thickness, and it yielded up its treasures accordingly. Between the moulding and the lining were found a number of papers and documents relating to the rising of 1745; some extremely curious, and all bearing the post-mark of the time, besides furniture more characteristic, and should have been left as an appropriate frame-work to the portraiture of Jack. There was a portion of a note for £10, and a cheque for £17. Among the papers also is a printed order for turning the Lincoln's Inn Theatre into a guard house, and suspending a performance announced on that occasion."

The Board School in Vere Street, Clare Market, occupies the site of the "Bull Head" (formerly No. 40 in that street), which is probably identical with the "Bull's Head," Clare Market, which was a favourite haunt of Sir Richard Steele. Here also was held "The Artists' Club," of which Hogarth was a member and the famous physician Dr. Radcliffe was a frequent visitor.

There was another called "Spiller's Head," from a very popular actor in the time of Rich, and who was the

The "Spiller's Head"

original "Mat o' the Mint" in the *Beggar's Opera*. Being of a somewhat extravagant turn of mind, he had to take refuge in the sanctuary of the Mint, but when that was abolished he was frequently lodged in the Marshalsea. He was highly esteemed by the theatrical butchers of Clare Market, so much so that a public-house in that neighbourhood, held by an ex-deputy keeper of the Marshalsea, which he frequented, obtained much vogue. Its original title, the "Bull and Butcher," was changed about three months before his death into the "Spiller's Head," a sign presenting the actor's portrait having been painted and given to the proprietor by Jaques Laguerre. He died on 7th February 1730, and it is said that a butcher in Clare Market wrote the following lines upon him :—

"Down with your marrow bones and cleavers all,
And on your marrow bones, ye butchers fall !
For prayers from you who never prayed before,
Perhaps poor Jimmie may to life restore.
'What have we done? the wretched bailiffs cry,
That th' only man by whom we lived should die !'
Enraged they gnaw their wax, and tear their writs,
While butchers' wives fall in hysteric fits ;
For sure, as they're alive, poor Spiller's dead,
But, thanks to *Jack Legar* ! we've got his *head*.
He was an inoffensive, merry fellow,
When sober, hipp'd, blythe as a bird when mellow."

At this tavern was a club called "The Shepherd and his Flock Club," of which Hogarth was a member ; Colley Cibber was at one time president of it, as was also Tom D'Urfey, and it was one of the most famous of tavern clubs, its members being artists, wits, and humorists. Hogarth designed the ornamenting of a silver tankard used by the club, in illustration of the story of Laban and his sheep, the engraving of which is highly prized by print collectors.

CHAPTER XXVI

Orator Henley—His Discourses—Brought before the Privy Council
—The “Cockpit” Theatre—Pepys’ Notices of—The first Drury
Lane Theatre—Burnt down—Reopened—Burnt down again
—Anecdote of Sheridan—Reopened—Russell Street—The
Coffee Houses—The “Albion”—The “Harp.”

INTIMATELY connected with Clare Market was the mountebank preacher, John Henley, commonly known as Orator Henley (*b.* 1692, *d.* 1756), for there he had what we should call a “proprietary chapel,” where in his “gilded tub,” as Pope called his pulpit, he performed extraordinary antics. As an instance, on one occasion he got together a large audience of shoemakers by promising that he would show them a new and speedy method of making shoes. This, he explained in the course of his oration, was by cutting the tops off boots. But the butchers liked him, and he probably preached to them so that they could understand him. Here is a synopsis of what he intended to do on Sunday, 28th September 1729:—

“At the Oratory, the corner of Lincoln’s Inn Fields, near Clare Market, to morrow at half an hour after ten :
1—The postil will be on the turning of Lot’s wife into a pillar of salt : 2—The sermon will be on the necessary power and attractive force which religion gives the spirit of a man with God and good spirits.

“II. At five : 1—The postil will be on this point : in what language our Saviour will speak the last sentence on mankind : 2—The lecture will be on Jesus Christ’s sitting at the right hand of God ; where it is ; the

Orator Henley

honours and lustre of his inauguration ; the learning, criticism, and piety of that glorious article.

“ The Monday’s orations will shortly be resumed. On Wednesday, the oration will be on the skirts of the fashions, or a live gallery of family pictures of all ages ; ruffs, muffs, puffs manifold ; shoes, wedding shoes, two shoes, slip shoes, heels, clocks, pantofles, buskins, pantaloons, garters, shoulder knots, periwigs, head dresses, modesties, tuckers, farthingales, cockins, minikins, slam-makins, ruffles, round robins, tollets, fans, patches ; dame, forsooth, madam, my lady, the wit and beauty of my grannum ; Winnifred, Joan, Bridget, compared with our Winny, Jenny, and Biddy ; fine ladies and pretty gentlewomen ; being a general view of the *beau monde* from before Noah’s flood to the year ’29. On Friday will be something better than last Tuesday. After each a bob at the times.”

Pope did not like him, and speaks of him several times in the *Dunciad* :

“ Imbrown’d with native bronze, lo ! Henley stands,
Tuning his voice, and balancing his hands.
How fluent nonsense trickles from his tongue !
How sweet the periods, neither said nor sung !
Still break the benches, Henley ! with thy strain,
While Sherlock, Hare and Gibson preach in vain.
O great restorer of the good old stage,
Preacher at once, and zany of the age !
O worthy thou of Egypt’s wise abodes,
A decent priest where monkeys were the gods.”

He also insinuated that he sometimes got drunk :

“ — Henley lay inspired beside a sink,
And, to mere mortals, seemed a priest in drink.”

In one of his lectures during the year of the rebellion in Scotland he uttered some expressions which were thought seditious, and he was cited before the Privy

Old Time Aldwych

Council. He was examined by Lord Chesterfield, who was at that time Secretary of State, and the Earl, having expostulated with him on the impropriety of ridiculing the exertions of his native country, at the moment when rebellion raged in the heart of the kingdom, Henley replied, "I thought there was no harm, my Lord, in *cracking a joke on a red Herring*," alluding to Archbishop Herring, who, in his zeal for the house of Hanover, had proposed, or actually commenced, arming the clergy. He was interrogated as to many disrespectful and unwarrantable expressions which he had applied to persons high in office, and, perfectly unabashed, he replied, "My Lords, I must live." "I see no kind of reason for that," said Lord Chesterfield, "but many against it." The Council roared with laughter at the retort, but Henley only observed "that it was a good thing, but it had been said before." After the lapse of a few days he was reprimanded, cautioned against a repetition of the offence, and dismissed.

From Clare Market to Drury Lane Theatre is but a short walk. There was a theatre in Drury Lane in Shakspeare's time called "the Phoenix" or "Cockpit," but very little is known of it. It was on the eastern side of the Lane, and its name long survived as Pitt Court, formerly Cockpit Alley. We hear nothing about it, and it must certainly have been shut up during the Commonwealth, until, as Downes tells us, "In the Year 1659, General *Monk*, marching then his army out of *Scotland* to *London*, Mr. *Rhodes*, a Bookseller, being Wardrobe Keeper formerly (as I am informed) to King *Charles* the First's Company of Comedians in *Blackfriars*, getting a License from the then Governing State, fitted up a house then for Acting, call'd the Cock-pit, in Drury Lane, and in a short time compleated his Company," which included Betterton and Kynaston. Of these two

The "Cockpit"

actors Downes says, after giving a list of the plays acted at the Cockpit: "Mr. *Betterton*, being then about 22 years old, was highly applauded for his acting in all these plays; his voice being then as audibly strong, full and articulate, as in the prime of his acting. Mr. *Kynaston* acted *Arthiope* in the *Unfortunate Lovers*; the *Princess*, in the *Mad Lover*; *Aglaura*; *Ismenia*, in the *Maid in the Mill*; and several other Women's Parts: he being then very young, made a compleat Female Stage Beauty; performing his parts so well, especially *Arthiope* and *Aglaura*, being parts greatly moving compassion and pity; that it has since been disputable among the judicious whether any Woman that succeeded him so sensibly touched the Audience as he."

There can be no doubt but that once having obtained a licence, the theatre kept on, for Pepys frequently mentions it after 18th August 1660: "Captain Ferrers took me and Creed to the Cockpit play, the first I have had time to see since my coming from sea, 'The Loyall Subject,' where one Kinaston, a boy, acted the Duke's sister, but made the loveliest lady that ever I saw in my life. After the play done, we went to drink, and by Captain Ferrers' means, Kinaston and another that acted Archas the General, came and drank with us."—"11 Oct. 1660. Here, in the Park, we met with Mr. Salisbury, who took Mr. Creed and me to the Cockpit to see 'The Moor of Venice,' which was well done. Burt acted the Moor; by the same token, a very pretty lady that sat by me, called out to see Desdemona smothered."—"21 Nov. 1660. This morning I found my Lord in bed late, he having been with the King, Queen, and Princesse at the Cockpit all night, where General Monk treated them."—"20 April 1661. So back to the Cockpit; and there, by the favour of one Mr. Bowman, he and I got in; and there saw the King,

Old Time Aldwych

and Duke of York and his Duchesse (which is a plain woman and like her mother, my Lady Chancellor). And so saw 'The Humersome Lieutenant' acted before the King, but not very well done. But my pleasure was great to see the manner of it, and so many great beauties, but, above all, Mrs. Palmer, with whom the King do discover a great deal of familiarity."—" 2 Oct. 1662. At night, hearing there was a play at the Cockpit, and my Lord Sandwich, who came to town last night, at it, I did go thither, and by very great fortune did follow four or five gentlemen, who were carried to a little private door in a wall, and so crept through a narrow place, and came into one of the boxes next the King's, but so as I could not see the King or Queen, but many of the fine ladies, who yet are not really so handsome generally as I used to take them to be, but that they are finely dressed."—" 13 Nov. 1662. Mr. Creed carried my wife and I to the Cockpit, and we had excellent places, and saw the King, Queen, Duke of Monmouth his son, and my Lady Castlemaine, and all the fine ladies; and 'The Scornfull Lady' well performed."—" 1 Dec. 1662. I to the Cockpit, with much crowding and waiting, where I saw 'The Valiant Cid' acted; a play I have read with great delight, but it is a most dull thing acted; which I never understood before, there being no pleasure in it, though done by Betterton, and by Ianthe, and another fine wench that is come in the room of Roxalana; nor did the King or Queen once smile all the whole play."—" 2 Jan. 1663. To the Cockpit, where we saw 'Claracilla,' a poor play, done by the King's House; but neither the King nor the Queen were there, but only the Duke and Duchess, who did show some impertinent and, methought, unnatural dalliances there, before the whole world, such as kissing of hands, and leaning upon one another; but to my very

Drury Lane Theatre

little content—they not acting in any degree like the Duke's people."

This was the last time he mentions the Cockpit, which in all probability ceased to be a theatre, as Killigrew and the principal actors soon after the Restoration got a Patent from the King, in order to create them the King's servants; and from that time they called themselves His Majesty's Company of Comedians. They obtained from the Earl of Bedford a lease for 41 years of a piece of ground lying in the parishes of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. Paul, Covent Garden, known by the name of the Riding Yard—the lessees, according to a condition of the lease, expending £1500 in erecting a theatre, and were to pay a rent of £50 for the ground; the theatre was 112 feet in length from east to west, and 59 feet in breadth from north to south. This was on the site of the present Drury Lane Theatre, and was called the "Theatre Royal," or the "King's Theatre in Covent Garden." Genest says: "I have not met with any play, which is expressly said in the title page to have been acted at the Theatre Royal, in Drury Lane, until after the division of the Company in 1695, nor am I aware that the Theatre is called Drury Lane in any preface—even in 1704 'Love the Leveller' is said in the title page to have been acted at the Theatre Royal, Bridges Street, Covent Garden.—On the 25th January 1719–20, an Order for Silence was issued from the Chamberlain's Office—it is directed to The Managers of the Theatre in Drury Lane in Covent Garden."

The new theatre was opened 8th April 1663, but being burnt down in January 1672, the King's Company, as we have already seen, went to Lincoln's Inn Fields, where they played until their new theatre was built. This was opened on 26th March 1674,

Old Time Aldwych

but it seems to have been plain in architecture and utilitarian in character, for, in Dryden's *Poems* there is a Prologue, which is said to have been spoken at its opening:

"A plain built house, after so long a stay,
Will send you half unsatisfy'd away.

Our Royal Master will'd it should be so ;
Whate'er he's pleased to own, can need no show :
'Twere folly now a stately pile to raise,
To build a playhouse when you throw down plays,
While scenes, machines and empty Operas reign,
And, for the pencil, you the pen disdain :

I would not prophesy our house's fate :
But, while vain shows and scenes you over rate
'Tis to be fear'd—
That, as a fire the former house o'erthrew,
Machines and tempests will destroy the new."

And in the Epilogue, also by Dryden, occur these lines:

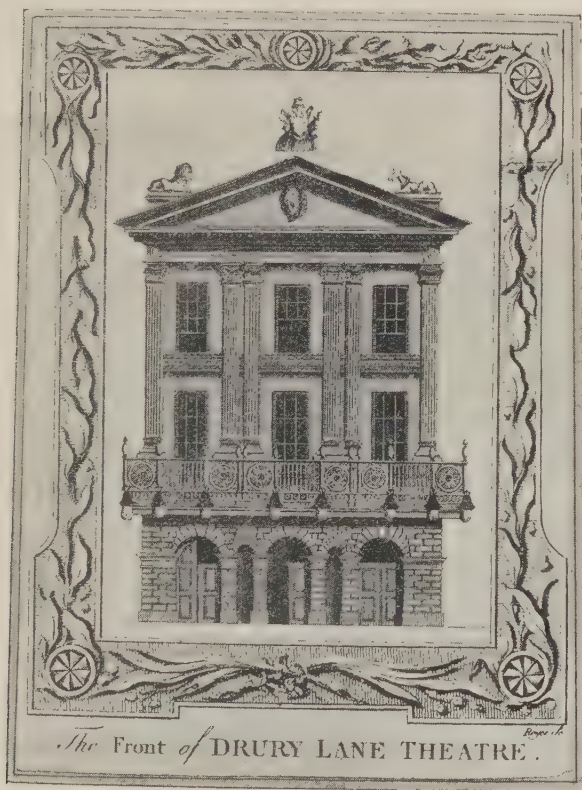
"Tho' what our Prologue said was sadly true, }
Yet, Gentlemen, our homely house is new, }
A charm that seldom fails with wicked you." }

We have seen how the King's and Duke's companies united, and they continued so. Rich, Steele, Dogget, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth were, successively, Patentees; and Garrick, in 1747, when he opened the theatre with the well-known Prologue written by Dr. Johnson, and commenced the revival of Shakspeare's plays. On 10th June 1776, Garrick here took his leave of the stage. Sheridan then became part proprietor. In 1791 the old theatre was taken down, rebuilt by Holland, and the new theatre opened 12th March 1794. It was but shortlived, for it was burnt down on 24th February 1809.

No one could tell the cause of the fire, for it happened on a Friday in Lent, and there had been no

Theatre Burnt

play nor rehearsal. Sheridan was in the House of Commons at the time. The House was illuminated by the blaze of light; and the interest taken in the circumstance interrupted the debate. A motion was made to adjourn, but Sheridan said, with great calmness, "that



whatever might be the extent of the private calamity, he hoped it would not interfere with the public business of the country." Many of his friends accompanied him to the scene of the conflagration, but they found that all the engines could do was to save the houses in Vinegar Yard and Russell Street, the roofs of which had caught

Old Time Aldwych

fire, from being burnt down. It is said that Sheridan behaved, on this occasion, with great *sang froid*, taking out his pocket-book and making calculations as to the cost of rebuilding. One of his friends remarked to him that he did not seem to care about it, to which he replied, "Where can a man enjoy himself better than by his own fireside?" At least that is how I have heard the story. It was soon rebuilt, and the present theatre was



THE RUINS OF DRURY LANE THEATRE AFTER THE FIRE
—24TH FEBRUARY 1809.

opened on 12th October 1812, with a prologue by Lord Byron.

Russell Street was famous for its coffee houses and taverns. "Will's" Coffee House was at the Bow Street corner, and is frequently mentioned in the "Augustan" period of literature. On the south side of the street was "Button's" Coffee House, equally well known. At No. 17, on the north side, was "Tom's," and here also was the "Albion," a famous supper house, noted for its

The “Harp”

Welsh rare bits. At the “Harp,” I believe, was founded “The Ancient Order of Buffalos,” and certainly here was “The City of Lushington,” with its Mayor and Aldermen. Much might be written of this street and its frequenters, but I have fulfilled my task, gone the round of my allotted district, and have now come to—

THE END.

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